

LAND CRUISER
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ZOOS OF SHAME

Britain fights for Europe's animals

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THE END OF THE ROAD



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THE REAL OSCAR WINNERS

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Yeltsin sacks all his ministers

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN stunned Russia yesterday by dismissing his entire Government and promising to appoint a more energetic team to push through reforms in his last two years in office.

The move caused momentary panic in Russia and abroad, until Mr Yeltsin appeared on television to thank his long-serving Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin for his loyal service, and to emphasise that he wanted a more vigorous approach to reform.

"The Government has clearly been lacking dynamism and initiative, new views and fresh approaches and ideas," Mr Yeltsin said, acknowledging that life had not improved for many Russians since the collapse of communism seven

that he was positioning himself to succeed Mr Yeltsin, may ultimately have led to his downfall.

Although Mr Yeltsin suggested that his outgoing premier wanted to begin work on his own presidential campaign, Mr Chernomyrdin's political career appeared to be finished, with his powerbase effectively swept away.

Anatoli Kubiakov, the Minister of the Interior who has been blamed for much of the bloody war in Chechnya, and Anatoli Chubais, the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for economic reform, were also named as ministers who would not be returning to cabinet posts.

However, other key figures including Boris Nemtsov, the deputy Prime Minister, Yevgeni Primakov, the Foreign Minister, and Igor Sergeyev, the Defence Minister, are expected to be included in the new cabinet after a new Prime Minister is named within the next two weeks.

In the meantime, a young technocrat with only a year's experience in government has been named as acting Prime Minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, 35, a little-known former oil refinery boss, has been catapulted from Energy Minister in what is expected to be a stopgap measure.

But while he is in office he is effectively Russia's second-in-command. Under the country's constitution, the Prime Minister takes over the duties of the President, including control of the country's huge nuclear arsenal, in the event that the head of state dies or is incapacitated.

Mr Kiriyenko said: "The offer came as a complete surprise. I learnt about it only this morning."

The real contenders are likely to include a wide selection of politicians who will be chosen for their abilities not only to run the Government, but also to negotiate vital reforms through the hostile opposition-controlled Duma, the lower house of Parliament.

Grigori Yavlinsky, the head of the liberal Yabloko movement, declared himself a candidate for the job. Other hopefuls include Mr Nemtsov, Yuri Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow, Igor Stroyev, the speaker of the Federation Council, and regional leaders such as Dmitri Aysatlov from Saratov and Konstantin Titov from Samara.

With only two years to go before the presidential elections, whoever succeeds will automatically become a strong challenger for the Kremlin leadership. However, any new candidate should be careful not to show too much interest in Mr Yeltsin's job before his term expires, or he may share the fate of Mr Chernomyrdin.

Yeltsin's choice, page 12
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"Sergei Kiriyenko, Best Acting Prime Minister"

years ago. "Without those a powerful upsurge in the economy is just impossible."

Mr Yeltsin's dismissal of all 29 ministers was seen partly as a genuine attempt to revitalise Russia's sluggish reform process, and partly as a ploy to re-establish himself as the unchallengeable ruler. The Russian leader has a taste for the unpredictable and he has frequently resorted to sacking unpopular ministers to assert his power and win populist support.

The main casualty yesterday was Mr Chernomyrdin, who over five years' had earned a reputation as a loyal and dependable deputy. In the West he was regarded as a solid alternative to the Russian leader, and that impression, combined with evidence



President Clinton and his wife, Hillary, wearing Kente cloths that were a gift from President Rawlings of Ghana, left, on the first leg of a six-nation African tour

Into Africa: the ultimate glad-hander

BY TOM RHODES
WASHINGTON
CORRESPONDENT

IT is impossible to ignore the arrival of the President of the United States, but in Africa yesterday some of the continent's poorest people must have wondered for a moment whether Bill Clinton was a visiting Pharaoh from their past.

Accompanied by an official delegation of 130, including his wife, Hillary, three Cabinet members and numerous distinguished black Americans — including the President's special envoy to Africa, the Rev Jesse Jackson, all that seemed absent from President Clinton's vast entourage were women scattering flowers before him as he walked.

Accra, the capital of Ghana, was teeming with Secret Ser-

vice agents, advance staff, communications specialists and, of course, more than 200 journalists who have paid \$13,000 each for the privilege of joining an 11-day, six-nation tour of Africa, the longest by any sitting President and one that last night took Mr Clinton to Uganda. Tonight these 200 disciples will have progressed to Rwanda; they will then move on to South Africa, Botswana and finally Senegal.

The White House remained mute about overall costs but the visit is certain to cost millions of dollars. Certainly, no expense has been spared to ensure that the leader of the free world can visit such small developing nations and still remain in touch with affairs both at home and abroad.

Employing the communications of Air Force One and other state-of-the-art technol-

ogy, the President and Samuel Berger, his National Security Adviser, were briefed hourly on the situation in Moscow yesterday.

And the President aims to use the trip to broadcast various new programmes to his domestic audience while attempting at the same time to dodge the continuing saga of his alleged infidelities.

For Mrs Clinton it is a return trip. Last year, she and her daughter, Chelsea, visited six African countries, including three of those on the current itinerary. For the President — a man initially irked by foreign policy duties — it is a much-relished opportunity to experience different cultures and soak up new information.

The African sojourn, the longest presidential visit since Ronald Reagan toured Europe in the spring of 1985, was said

by aides to have been driven by Mr Clinton's personal desire to make what he has called the "first serious trip to Africa" of any American leader.

His aides are also well aware that Mr Clinton can be assured of a personal boost at home by the wall-to-wall television coverage of ecstatic crowds lining the routes of his motorcade.

Even so, the visitors — and particularly the President — must have been perplexed yesterday by the scenes they encountered. The rigours of American politics had scarcely prepared Mr Clinton for the reality of democracy African-style as he ventured for the first time into a continent that is so very different from his own.

Shaking hands and greeting the people has always been a

presidential necessity of which Mr Clinton has been justly proud. But it is deemed a security hazard at the best of times, and it was never more so than yesterday in Independence Square, the capital's centre-piece, where hundreds of thousands of thrusting hands, each desperate to touch but a thread of his sombre suit, finally proved too much even for the ultimate glad-hander.

Several women lay crushed and injured by a surging mass that threatened to knock down the barriers and overwhelm Mr Clinton. The President's face, already reddened by the sun, adopted a strange purple hue and as Secret Service agents rushed to his assistance he was forced to cry "Back up, back up."

Trade not aid, page 11

IN BRIEF

NCP founders share £580m

The two founders of the NCP car park empire will share £580 million after agreeing to sell to an American company. Candant Corporation has agreed to pay £801 million for National Parking Corporation, the parent company of NCP, in which Ronald Hobson and Sir Donald Gosling, and their family trusts have a 72.5 per cent interest. Page 27

Support for BBC lottery show

Sir Christopher Bland, chairman of the BBC governors, gave his full backing to a National Lottery game show that is said to breach BBC guidelines by promoting a commercial product. He has written to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, denying that the show, which centres on a £2 scratchcard, is unsuitable for a public service broadcaster. Page 4

New watchdog for the police

Inquiries into serious allegations against police officers could be taken away from forces and carried out by independent investigators, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said. Investigators could be former military officers, Customs 'officials', lawyers, accountants or specialist investigation units. Page 2

'Casablanca' to be reworked

An American writer has produced a prequel and a sequel to *Casablanca*, the classic film starring Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart. Nancy Wiese, rights director at Warner Books, says Michael Walsh "has developed the characters beautifully". Page 5

France faces legal action over World Cup tickets

BY CHARLES BREMMER IN BRUSSELS AND ADRIAN LEE

THE French organisers of the World Cup face a multimillion pound fine after rejecting a compromise which would have freed more tickets for England football supporters.

The European Commission said yesterday that it was beginning legal action for discrimination against non-French residents. Karel van Miert, the Competition Commissioner, said that the organisers were abusing their dominant position in allocating the 2.5 million tickets in such a way that six out of ten will go to French supporters.

The organising committee had earlier told Mr van Miert that his proposal that all 111,000 unsold tickets should go to foreign fans was unacceptable. They were prepared to offer only 50,000 to other national federations.

Marie-George Buffet, the French Sports Minister, said that it was "quite unacceptable" that more should go abroad, since French taxpayers

had partly funded the event. But if the organisers do not climb down within three weeks, the Commission can impose a fine of 10 per cent of the total revenue for the competition.

At present the English Football Association will receive fewer than 9,000 tickets — or 8 per cent of the total — for three group matches, while 20 per cent will go to sponsors and corporate hospitality clients.

Associations from Belgium, Germany, Scotland, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Italy and Japan have also complained. The French say the tournament, which starts in June, is a victim of its own success. There have been 20 million requests for tickets, but there are far fewer available than there were in America four years ago, because the French grounds are much smaller.

The FA said that it regretted the need for legal action and would continue its own efforts to secure more tickets. But Alison Pilling, international officer of the Football Supporters Association, said that the Commission had acted too late.

"They knew about this problem last June. It is unlikely that this will result in any more tickets for England fans, but I do hope the organisers are taken to court as a warning to future World Cup organisers."



van Miert: action on "abuse of power"

So near, yet so far away from the ideal parking slot

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

IN supermarket car parks the unimaginative do best, according to an analysis by two American engineers.

Volvo drivers who take the first lane available and then park in the first unoccupied space do better than go-getters in BMWs who race up and down trying to find the perfect slot.

On average, a driver using

the dull but effective method takes 61 seconds in the average analysed, while the more aggressive motorist takes 71 seconds.

The analysis, from Dr Richard Casady of Mississippi State University and Dr John Kobayashi of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, appears in *Transportation Science*. They used mathematical not observation of individual drivers, to work out the best strategy.

They assumed a rectangular

car park with entrances and exits at each corner, and seven rows running up and down, each of them one-way. There were 72 spaces in each row. While no real car park may be exactly like this, the general principles probably apply to many car.

The two engineers took into account three measures of what makes a good parking space: total walking distance from the space to the supermarket front door, the time

taken to locate the space; and the total time, found by adding the two together.

The assumption was made that drivers can spot a space in a lane as soon as they enter it and that the go-getting types would rather go into another lane in search of a place closer to their destination if there are no good places in the first lane they try.

The actual times taken depend on the entrance chosen and the lane selected. But the

conclusion is that — unless walking is a particular problem — it makes sense to choose the first lane and the first available slot, even if it seems a long walk to the door.

The analysis could be incorporated into driver information systems which would give drivers real-time information as they parked, the authors suggest. More realistically, they say, it could be used to evaluate car park design.

5 facts

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Passionate fantasies lose their warmth in front of the Brazier

Julian Brazier (C. Canterbury) intervened on a question yesterday about violence against women. So did Lorna Fitzsimons (Lab, Rochdale) whose concern was impassioned. Trim Ms Fitzsimons is 30. If Captain Brazier had responded "Cor! Wouldn't mind giving you one!" pandemonium would have broken out among new Labour's new women MPs. They would have pointed to the outrageous remark as further evidence of male Tory sexism.

But then they might not

have read Ms Fitzsimons's interview last year in the *News of the World*. Under the headline "I may be an MP but I need more sex", the MP for Rochdale was quoted describing herself as "an outrageous flirt" who is "wicked to some of the boys".

"Generally, if I want to go to bed with somebody, I tell them," she continued — to the *News of the World*, not to poor Captain Brazier, who looks as though, solicited by a lady as determined as Lorna Fitzsimons he might pass out. "I realise I can't do all the



POLITICAL SKETCH

things I used to. I can't have a fresco sex or three in a bed... not that I did."

Captain Brazier, so far as he has thought about *al fresco* sex at all, will have either confused *al fresco* with *al dente* or (more likely) supposed it involved making love up against a painted wall in an Italian church.

As for the idea of *three*, we doubt whether the Captain could get his mind round such a proposal, let alone agree to it. Three in a bed for Brazier would involve a rather woe-begone teddy bear, relic of young Julian's nursery days — and with strictly observer status. Or he might cover the teddy's eyes.

On Thursday, having thought the unthinkable, Mr Field has promised to say the unsayable. This statement will be the long-awaited unveiling of the Government's new philosophical map to the landscape of 21st-century welfare. Yesterday was Mr Blair's MPs' last opportunity to advise, to question, to encourage, or to warn.

Composing Early-Day Motions regretting the BBC's reduced coverage of Parliament? A "doughnut" is that little knot of friendly MPs who ring a minister for the TV cameras. In the Parliament of New Britain, "quorum" must be redefined as "enough for a doughnut".

Outside agencies may investigate police complaints

INQUIRIES into serious allegations against police officers could be taken away from forces and carried out by independent investigators, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said yesterday.

Investigators could be former military officers, Customs officials, lawyers, accountants or specialist investigation units in government departments such as the Post Office. They would be appointed by the Police Complaints Authority and might also include retired detectives. The PCA could also have a "cadre of independent investigators" at its disposal for exceptional cases.

The proposal will be seen as the first move towards a completely independent system, rather than allowing police forces to investigate complaints themselves. Mr Straw pointed out that the new Criminal Cases Review Commission already used independent investigators.

Mr Straw is also planning new powers that will allow him to direct the PCA to launch an investigation in exceptional cases where there is no complaint. In the Hillsborough disaster, for example, there were immediate doubts about the policing of the football match.

The Home Secretary announced the possible use of independent investigators while unveiling reforms that

Stewart Tendler reports on Home Secretary's plans to rid forces of a 'corrosive minority'

would allow chief constables to cut out the 'corrosive minority' of crooked officers in the police service.

The package follows a highly critical report by the Commons select committee on home affairs into police complaints and discipline systems. Yesterday Mr Straw made it clear the Government will adopt many of the committee's reforms.

The committee suggested that the Home Office should look at the feasibility of setting up a completely independent investigation system if public confidence in the current system did not improve. Yesterday, Mr Straw said that he would order officials to begin a study of an such a system, also the use of a police ombudsman — already employed in Holland and some Scandinavian countries.

He made it clear that he would favour a independent system for all serious complaints. He had tried to bring in a Bill supporting the idea as a backbencher in 1980. He said bad officers must be

dealt with robustly. Other measures in the package include a fast track system to get rid of officers caught red-handed committing offences, an end to the right of silence during internal investigations, and a reduction in the burden of proof. Even when officers were acquitted in court, they would face discipline hearings for the offences.

Officers who tried to claim they were sick to avoid investigation could be dealt with in their absence. Mr Straw said he was also insisting that he would take firm action against officers convicted of criminal offences who later claimed pensions. All police authorities will have to pass requests for pensions to the Home Office, and former officers could lose up to 75 per cent of their pensions.

The package of reforms was immediately welcomed by police and MPs. The Association of Chief Police Officers said there was public concern about the "legalistic and procedurally tortuous system" of dealing with disciplinary matters that protected some bad officers. The changes would allow these officers to be weeded out.

The Superintendents' Association of England and Wales said the proposals were balanced and the Home Secretary had managed to resist calls for draconian measures. Chris Mullin, the chairman of the select committee, said the measures by the Home Secretary would help to maintain public confidence.



Mo Mowlem meeting businessmen in Belfast yesterday as the talks resumed

Maze murderers foil investigation

By OUR CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE police may never be able to prove which of the 31 Loyalist Volunteer Force inmates in the Maze prison murdered David Keys in his cell last week, security sources said yesterday.

It is believed at least 20 LVF members smeared his blood on their clothes in order to protect his killers. "There was considerable cross-contamination," said one official.

All were taken to the Belfast's Castle-reagh holding centre for questioning, but none broke ranks and no charges are

anticipated in the near future. "I would not anticipate making any breakthrough," said the source.

Keys was one of four men charged with the murders of lifelong friends Philip Allen and Damien Trainor in the County Armagh village of Poyntpass on March 3. The inmates, who normally enjoy a free run of their two wings in H-Block 6, are now locked in their cells, and four of them have gone on hunger strike in protest. In a statement yesterday the LVF said one more prisoner would join the strike each day, and again threatened "direct action" against prison officials. It

protested that republican prisoners had not been locked in their cells following the murder in the Maze of loyalist Billy Wright's murder.

Prison Service officials said they were not yet treating the hunger strike very seriously and noted the inmates were still taking liquids. Sir David Ramsbottom, the Chief Inspector of Prisons in England and Wales, yesterday began a full-scale inspection of the Maze, ordered after December's escape of a republican terrorist dressed in women's clothes, and the killing of Wright, the LVF leader, by republican inmates.

Blair tells French to take third way

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR will today challenge the French and other European governments to adopt his vision of the "third way" in their approach to the economy, jobs, social policy and the future of the European Union.

In an address in French to the National Assembly in Paris, the Prime Minister will call for the abandonment of old ideologies as governments respond to a rapidly changing world. There is no such thing as Left or Right in economic management any more, only good or bad, he will say.

His advocacy of "la troisième voie" — usually defined as the route between old Labour state control and a Thatcherite free-market — is certain to be read by some French politicians as an attack on their ideals.

But Mr Blair's spokesman emphasised yesterday that

the address was neither intended to be a lecture to the French socialists nor a criticism of their policies, and was as much about Britain. It was also denied that a fresh call for flexible labour markets was an attack on the French Government's backing for a 35-hour working week.

The speech was billed in advance last night by Downing Street as "the most complete statement of the Prime Minister's personal creed since the election".

With the Government's Green Paper on welfare reform out on Thursday and sure to provoke a worried reaction within the labour movement, Mr Blair will say that there should be "no ideological pre-conditions, no pre-determined veto on means. What counts is what works. If we do not take this attitude, change traps us, paralyses us, defeats us."

Minister caught writing questions for tame MPs

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A GOVERNMENT Minister is facing embarrassment in the Commons after it was discovered he was writing his own questions for tame Labour MPs to fire at him at the dispatch box.

Nigel Griffiths, a junior minister at the Department of Trade and Industry, tries to tempt the MPs to accept his wording with the prospect of good coverage in their local newspapers.

But some of the questions, which have been drafted by Mr Griffiths on official Department of Trade and Industry ministerial headed paper, have gone astray. One of the letters, which is a breach of Parliamentary rules, arrived on the fax machine in the House of Commons office of John Redwood, the Shadow trade and industry secretary. It

was a draft question to Jackie Lawrence, the MP for Preseli Pembrokeshire, which urged her to table a question on carbon monoxide poisoning. Mr Griffiths suggested the precise wording at the bottom of the letter. "I can assure you a helpful response which your local paper may be interested in when I respond to you on the floor of the House of Commons on April 2," he wrote.

In the past, ministers' special aides have selected MPs to table helpful questions during question time to deflect the Opposition fire. But it is a subtle operation conducted in darkened corridors and in the Commons smoking room. Few ministers have ever been exposed writing down the questions themselves.



Nigel Griffiths "caught in the act"

and Industry team issued every MP last month for question time with a 15-page briefing note dossier. Many of the MPs, who asked the questions, read them straight from the briefing note crib sheet.

A copy of the Griffiths letter has been sent to the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, who deprecates such techniques. Mr Redwood said: "Nigel Griffiths has been caught in the act, so much for spontaneity. So much for the cut and thrust of debate. It makes the whole procedure a farce. I suppose it shows we have got them

Lawyer and prisons chief to meet on abuse claim

By RICHARD FORD AND DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE senior prison governor investigating claims of abuse in Wormwood Scrubs jail is to meet the solicitor representing eight inmates at the centre of the allegations today.

Peter Atherton will request the names of the eight inmates whose allegations of mistreatment and assault were outlined in a dossier handed to the Chief Inspector of Prisons last week.

Yesterday members of the inquiry team removed papers, medical reports and forms on cell restraints used when inmates are in the care and control unit at the West London jail.

Daniel Machover, has refused to name the eight, but says he has had constructive dialogue with the inquiry team.

Closure of secure units 'no threat'

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Government moved swiftly yesterday to reassure the public that people would not be put at risk by the closure of three top-security mental hospitals, housing some of the country's most dangerous criminals.

But the health department admitted that for too long Rampton, Broadmoor and Ashworth hospitals had been neglected and not effectively controlled.

An internal departmental inquiry into the future of the hospitals has recommended they be closed and replaced by up to eight smaller secure units.

The most dangerous of the 1,400 patients, including Ian Brady, the Moors murderer, and Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper, would be detained in the secure units. The less dangerous patients would be housed in medium-secure units. Frank Dobson, the

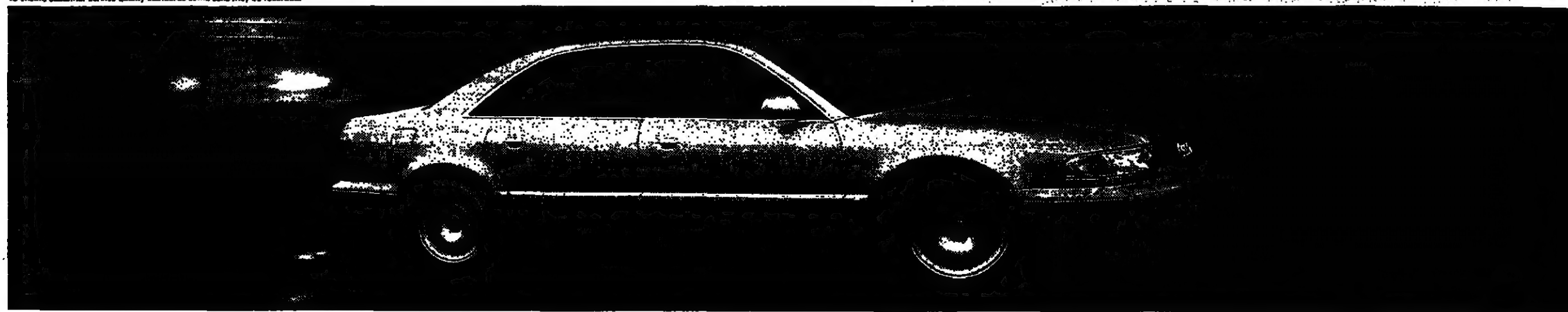
health secretary, said: "There is no reason for the public to be alarmed. These special high security hospitals are there to protect the public."

He said that no decision had been made on the future of the hospitals. "The decision will be made on the basis that the public must be safe and secure. Whatever the experts advise, safety will be our main consideration."

A statement from the health department distanced Labour ministers from the review of the hospitals. It pointed out that the study had been commissioned by the previous government and that ministers did not feel themselves bound by its findings. The future of the three hospitals is being considered as part of a wider review of the mental health treatment in the country.

Leading article, page 19

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Anatomy official saw that artwork was cast of head

Pictures at a macabre exhibition aroused suspicions over sculptures, reports Kathryn Knight

AN ARTIST paid a technician to help him smuggle heads, limbs and torsos from an anatomy laboratory to use as moulds for his sculptures, a court was told yesterday.

Anthony-Noel Kelly and Niel Lindsay smuggled the human remains from the Royal College of Surgeons late at night and later buried them on his father's estate, leaving some at a friend's flat.

Their ruse was discovered after a suspicious government inspector saw photographs of Mr Kelly's first exhibition in a newspaper article and realised only real anatomical remains could have been used. He contacted police and the pair were both arrested last year.

Mr Kelly, 42, a teacher at the Prince of Wales Architectural Institute, and Mr Lindsay, 25, both deny theft between June 1991 and November 1994. Mr Kelly denies a further count of handling stolen goods.

Before the case was opened, Judge Geoffrey Rivlin, QC, warned the jury they would be listening to a very unusual

theft case and that some of the photographs they would be viewing would be particularly disturbing.

Andrew Campbell-Tiech, for the prosecution, said the two-week trial at Southwark Crown Court was "in essence a simple case, although undoubtedly the undisputed facts are exceptional, unusual and macabre". He said Dr Laurence Martin, HM Inspector of Anatomy, had seen a photograph in a Sunday newspaper article featuring



Niel Lindsay, accused of stealing parts

Mr Kelly's first art exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Fair in Islington last year. The photos showed the cast of a human head. "He realised immediately that the principal work of art could only have been cast from parts of a dead body," Mr Campbell-Tiech said. "He also realised that in the normal course of events no one should have such things outside of a licensed medical institute."

The concerned inspector contacted all the medical institutes around the country asking them if they were missing any body parts. When they replied that they were not, he contacted police, whose subsequent investigation led them to home of Mr Kelly in Clapham, south London.

The jury were shown a series of photographs taken in Mr Kelly's house, showing moulds of human heads and feet and other body parts.

Detectives had not at first known what they were dealing with, but were keen to know where the original parts were buried. Mr Kelly was



Anthony-Noel Kelly and one of his sculptures, modelled from a dead human head. He denies theft and handling stolen goods

arrested and during his first interview said he had buried a series of parts in the grounds of his family estate in Komden, near Ashford, Kent. But a diary entry revealed this was only a cover story and Mr Kelly had stored other remains in the basement of a girlfriend's flat in

nearby Brixton. "Mr Kelly told police she did not know he had hidden casts in her basement storeroom," Mr Campbell-Tiech said. Over the next two days, police recovered various rotting remains from the family estate, including a human head and torso, various limbs and parts

of limbs and further human anatomical remains. At the Brixton address they found black binliners and boxes containing more human remains, including parts of a human forearm in a Tupperware box. Mr Kelly had initially attempted to protect Mr Lindsay but his

diary contained continual references to an "NL" and "without trouble" the police found Mr Lindsay, who had left the Royal College in 1994, and arrested him on April 7. During interviews it emerged that the background to the case dated from 1993, when Mr Kelly gained permission

to sketch some of the specimens at the RCS. Through his visits he became friendly with Mr Lindsay, a former butcher and abattoir worker who had worked as a laboratory assistant who had worked there for a number of years. The trial continues.

Students join queue for death master class

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE first masters degree in death is to begin this year and would-be students are already queuing to join the course.

Reading University says that the decision to offer a masters in "Death and Society" came after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. The euthanasia debate and the continuing prevalence of genocide in international conflicts made death and related subjects "the most talked-of topics in the modern world".

The course is not intended to help those suffering from bereavement, however, and course literature advises that it may even exacerbate any pre-existing personal distress. "Those who have recently suffered a major bereavement might want to consider postponing applying," the university advises.

The one-year full-time degree, which can be taken over two years part-time, includes modules on "the modern way of death", "disposal of the dead in the modern West", "the sociology of the afterlife" and "viewing the body in 17th-century England".

Tony Walter, sociology reader and course director, who has illustrated the university Web page on the course with a vivid graphic of a running skeleton, said that Reading had "a level of international excellence in this area over a number of different departments".

The archaeology department is known internationally for its work on burial archaeology, and we have one of the world's leading experts on death in Ancient Greece. In addition, Dr Ralph Houltbrooke, in the history depart-

ment, is well known for his work on death in the 16th and 17th centuries."

Three academics from Reading's sociology department sit on the board of a new journal, *Mortality*, and the university is thought to have more social scientists researching death than any other British university.

Students are expected to be from the caring professions, such as clergy, nurses and undertakers, or young graduates in history and archaeology.

The aims of the course are to foster curiosity about how societies handle death, to give students a new understanding of the symbolism and ritual of death and to provide training for career advancement or further research. Career prospects for students who gain their masters are not spelled out, but it could lead to a doctorate and a life of academic study, or enhance job prospects in the fields of nursing, undertaking and related subjects.

Dr Walter, author of a book called *The Revival of Death*, said that death was brushed under the carpet at the end of the Victorian era and remained there for half of this century. But in the past 20 or 30 years there has been a very definite revival of death as a subject of conversation. Death is a very fashionable topic.

"Everybody has asked me if this course is not a bit morbid. I don't find it so and have been researching this area for about ten years. The academics engaged in this area are human people and fun to be with. They are certainly not dull or morbid."

Bible play an act of blasphemy, says pastor

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A THEATRE company could face a rare blasphemy prosecution for a play which portrays Christ as a Teletubby and describes the Virgin Mary as sleeping with the "holy goat".

A church minister and a solicitor have joined forces against the Reduced Shakespeare Company's production *The Bible: The Complete Word of God (Abridged)*, to open at the Gateway theatre in Chester in June.

The play, which has already toured the American Bible belt and other parts of England without mishap, has provoked the wrath of Pastor David Carson, of Chester's Zion Tabernacle, who described it as a "complete mockery of the word of God".

He is taking advice from Tony Bennett, a solicitor from Harlow, Essex, who accuses the company of "meeting out 'ribald treatment' and undermining the Bible. Mr Bennett said the play contravened common law regarding blasphemous libel, and he was awaiting counsel's advice on whether a prosecution could be brought.

The California-based Reduced Shakespeare Company advertises the play on the Internet with the words: "The bad boys of abridgement are back and this time it's blasphemy." It includes a sketch in which John the Baptist's head is brought in singing: "I ain't got no body", and ribald jokes about Adam and Eve and circumcision.

David Johnson, its producer, said: "The spirit in which the show is portrayed is very clear. It is not subversive."

Margarine is first item for Diana fund to hit shelves

SHOPPERS were slow to buy fund-raising tubs of margarine carrying the signature of Diana, Princess of Wales, yesterday when they went on sale for the first time.

The special tubs of Flora, with the work Thanks in big letters on the top, is the first product to carry the official logo commemorating the princess. It costs no extra.

Many shoppers outside Tesco's store in Pimlico, south-west London, said they were unaware of the fund-raising cartons. James Foster, 31, a fund manager, said: "I don't find it offensive because presumably the people responsible for the fund have given permission to raise money in this way. Also the money raised will be going to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund."

But housewife Mary Ashworth, 50, said the Thanks



A tub of margarine with the commemorative logo

packs were an insult to the princess. She said: "I think it is awful and tacky. I am a big royal fan and I don't think this is the right way to remember Princess Diana. I certainly won't be buying it."

Howard Davis, 45, a sales assistant, said: "If it is for a good cause then so be it. So long as the people responsible for the fund have given their support, then I don't have a problem with it."

Sarah Jones, 37, who works in sales, from South London,

said: "She has been promoted as a brand name by the people responsible for her name, so it is no surprise to see it in the shops."

The Prince of Wales is expected to take his sons William and Harry to at least two World Cup football matches in France when the competition kicks off in June.

Buckingham Palace confirmed yesterday that members of the royal family were making plans to attend the event, but said it was too early to know who would be attending which games.

Yesterday the Prince and his two sons left for Vancouver, where they will spend a short private skiing holiday at the resort of Whistler in the Canadian Rockies. Before travelling to the slopes, Prince William and Prince Harry will visit the Pacific Space Centre.

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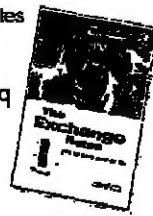


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COMPAQ

Bland backs BBC over controversial lottery game show

THE chairman of the BBC governors last night gave his full backing to a controversial National Lottery game show that is said to breach BBC guidelines by promoting a commercial product.

Sir Christopher Bland has written a ten-page letter to Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, denying that the show, based around a £2 scratchcard, is inappropriate for a public service broadcaster.

Mr Smith ordered the governors to examine the format of the *National Lottery Big Ticket*, which starts on Saturday and which Camelot hopes will boost flagging sales of scratchcards. MPs reacted angrily to the TV Dreams card, which offers the chance of appearing on the show and winning up to £100,000, television's biggest prize.

Under the rules that guarantee its state funding, the BBC must not promote commercial products, offer overly large prizes and should pay for any prizes it offers. In this case the prize money will come from the National Lottery.

The BBC said Sir Christopher had given a detailed and robust reassurance that the programme was "in accordance with the BBC charter, agreement and its producer guidelines". The governors took legal advice before writing the letter.

As the new show was launched yesterday by the presenters Anthea Turner and Patrick Kielty, the BBC admit-

Carol Midgley on the television show designed to boost the flagging sales of scratchcards

ted that the scratchcard would be mentioned on the programme but denied that that amounted to promotion.

Miss Turner said she could mention the scratchcard but not Camelot, the lottery operator. "I have never mentioned Camelot in all the years I have been doing the lottery show," she said.

Gerald Kaufman, chairman of the Culture Select Committee,



Bland gave a "detailed and robust reassurance"

tee, who raised concerns about the programme in the Commons, said: "This is all a load of rubbish. This is a transparent G-string behind which they are breaching the ethics of the BBC. This is a commercial partnership where Camelot is being given free airtime to promote scratchcards. I have heard Camelot wants to increase sales by 20 per cent due to this show."

Tomorrow in an adjournment debate Mr Kaufman will call on the Government to ask the BBC to scrap the show.

The presenters have been banned from being photographed with the TV Dreams tickets and the BBC has ordered that its name should not be used in any promotional advertising. Insiders say BBC executives "bitterly regret" agreeing to the new £8 million, 16-episode series, and say the format will be changed as soon as possible. Clearly sensitive to the issue, the BBC did not mention the word scratchcard in ten pages of promotional material.

A spokeswoman for Camelot said the show was modelled on the Dutch lottery show, *Tony Wolfe*, the show's executive producer, admitted it was a controversial programme. He said his team had been very conscious of BBC guidelines when devising the format.

To ensure the programme meets regulations laid down both by the BBC and the



Patrick Kielty and Anthea Turner at the launch of the new National Lottery show in London yesterday

lottery regulator Oflot, celebrities and representatives of the good causes will play games of skill while scratchcard winners will take part only in games of complete luck.

The show will replace the present National Lottery draw and will run for 50 minutes on Saturday night. The first game was recorded this weekend. National Lottery draws will be incorporated live into the broadcast.

Miss Turner said the new show's attraction was that viewers would be able to see people winning enormous sums of money, which would add an edge to proceedings. "What everyone wants to see is what does someone feel when they find out they've won not just a thousand pounds, a kitchen or a car. This is serious money, this is money that can make and change

someone's life. To see that happen is something completely different." Mr Kaufman said he believed there was a great deal of unease within the BBC over the move—shown, he said, by their need to take legal advice on the issue.

'Mercy' for TV licence dodgers

By CAROL MIDGLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

VIEWERS caught watching television without a licence should no longer face criminal prosecution, a report recommends today.

TV *Slurpers*, from the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (Nacab), says it is extraordinary that people can get a criminal record and in some cases be jailed for watching television in their own home. It urges that the offence be dealt with as a civil matter in the county court rather than magistrates' court.

About 200,000 people are prosecuted each year in Britain for non-payment of the licence fee. Most of those prosecuted are women, often single mothers. People with mental health problems and those whose first language is not English are particularly vulnerable to prosecution.

The report, based on evidence from 200 bureaux, called for the BBC to introduce weekly and fortnightly payments immediately and accept payments by credit cards.

The black and white licence fee should be abolished immediately, it says, and in special cases the debt for a licence written off when a person is on such a low income he or she cannot afford to pay even the smallest instalments.

In April the fee will increase by 16p to £97.50 for a colour set. Non-payers face fines of up to £1,000. David Harter, chief executive of Nacab, said: "It seems that those least able to afford it are being forced to pay the price of the BBC's digital revolution."

Rock group regrets Blair's support

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

WHEN Tony Blair included a record by an obscure folk-rock band called Ezio in his Desert Island Discs the Cambridge combo became famous overnight and record companies vied to snap them up. Yesterday, more than a year on, they complained that the dream had soured.

The man responsible? Tony Blair. In yet another blow to the Prime Minister's attempt to establish himself as the high priest of Cool Britannia, Ezio Lunedei said having the Prime Minister on his side was about as helpful as a

particularly untrendy uncle. Back in 1996 the then Leader of the Opposition told Sue Lawley that he wanted to take Ezio's *Cancel Today* to his desert island because the song was a source of comfort. "It's about wanting today to go away which is usually how I feel when Prime Minister's questions comes along," he said.

At the time Ezio Lunedei was unable to afford to buy new tyres for his car and his partner in the band, Mark "Booga" Fowell lived with his mother and a £100 overdraft. Suddenly they found their concerts packed and record company

executives trampling each other underfoot in the stampede to sign them up. They signed to Universal MCA for a five-album deal.

But now the band claims that people are not buying their records for the very reason that Mr Blair likes them and they don't want to listen to the same music as the Prime Minister. "It's not a great thing to be known as the ones liked by such an establishment figure, you can't expect the kids to buy our records if they want to shock their mum. It's been like an albatross around my neck," said Ezio, a former chartered accountant.

Mandelson attacks Dome 'cynics'

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

PETER MANDELSON labelled critics of his Millennium Exhibition "professional cynics" who would only be happy if the Dome fell down so they could say "I told you so".

The Minister Without Portfolio said yesterday it was untrue that poisonous waste from Greenwich was being allowed to seep into the English countryside, as environ-

mental campaigners have complained. He said he would be happy to be forever associated in people's minds with the Dome.

"I don't mind that," he told the Newspaper Conference annual luncheon at the London Hilton. "The Dome is a wonderful building and the contents are going to blow your socks off."

Mr Mandelson said that as the Millennium approached it was natural for some people,

with deep worries about the future, to retreat into nostalgia. "Others abandon themselves to pessimism—a response of paralysis, withdrawing into one ghetto or another where things are safer and where the threatening world can no longer impinge."

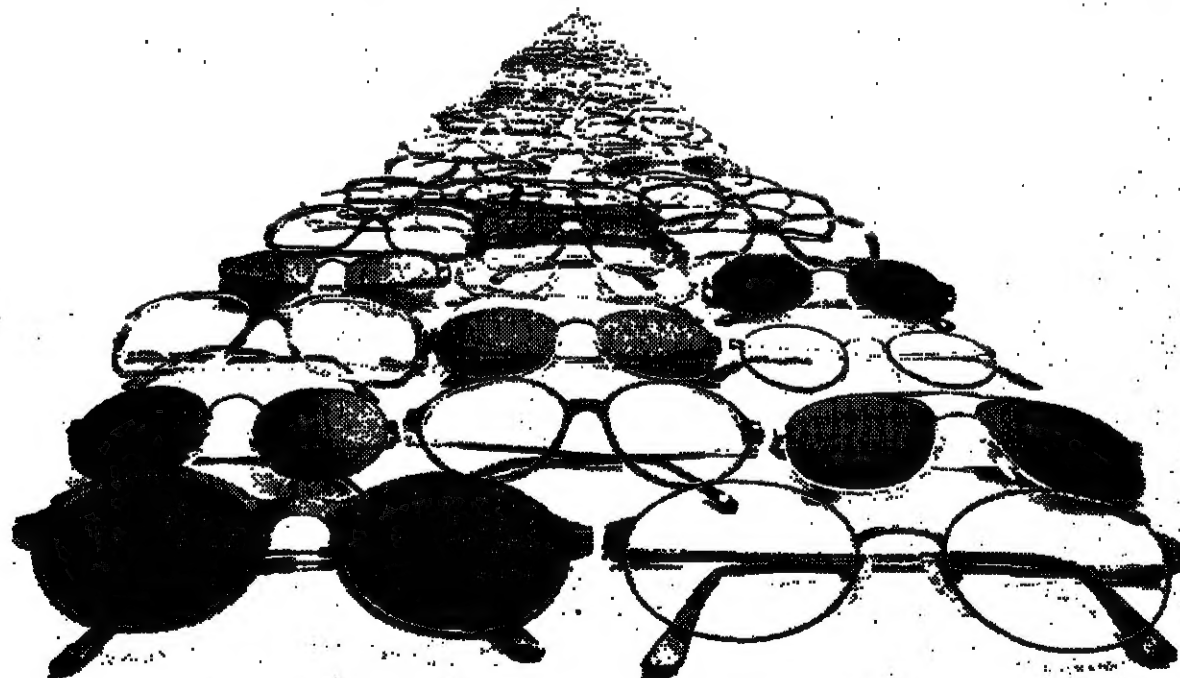
The worst of all are those who combine the two—the nostalgic pessimists, those who will only be happy if the Dome at Greenwich, or whatever, falls down and they can

sit even further back in their armchair and say they told us so.

"We all know about the professional cynics. In my job in the Labour Party I have been wrestling with them for over a decade—the negative carpers who just want to pull threads in everything."

Mr Mandelson pledged that the transport and ticket arrangements would make a visit to the Dome affordable to people all over the country.

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OPTICIANS

Comeback hope to solve Newcastle's boardroom crisis

SIR JOHN HALL was being tipped last night as a saviour of beleaguered Newcastle United. The Geordie entrepreneur, whose millions saved the Premiership side from oblivion in the lower divisions six years ago, was set to come out of retirement to take over as chairman once more.

Northumbria Police announced that they had been asked to investigate reports of the activities of Sir John's son, Douglas, a Newcastle director, and Freddy Shepherd, the present club chairman. Lawyers for Mr Hall have issued a denial that he took drugs.

In a statement, Northumbria Police said they had been approached by several members of the public and Jim Cousins, the Newcastle Central Labour MP, who had expressed "concern" over allegations. The statement said: "We are looking at what evidence is available."

Sir John, who celebrated his 65th birthday last weekend, relinquished the Newcastle chairmanship last December, saying he intended to spend more time on the golf course in Spain. He is highly regarded by the club's supporters and the City, and many believe his return would calm the Stock Market and the crisis-torn club. He would replace Mr Shepherd, who, with Douglas Hall, has outraged fans with alleged comments about supporters, women and players.

Until yesterday Mr Shepherd, 56, and Douglas Hall, 39, had refused pointblank to resign their directorships of the club, in spite of a storm of protest which has continued unabated on Tyneside and in some City quarters since the two men were the target of a *News of the World* expose two weekends ago.

Last week, Sir John issued a statement rejecting calls for his return, but the head of pressure for his son and Mr Shepherd to go has if anything increased since then. It was fuelled at the weekend by suggestions from Sir Terence Harrison, chairman of the

club's controlling plc, that he and his two fellow independent non-executive directors might go if Mr Shepherd and Mr Hall did not.

Yesterday the plc board spent the day locked in private discussions. The meeting at the club ground, St James's Park, had been scheduled originally as a routine session to approve the plc's half-yearly figures, believed to show a £10 million profit. However the crisis of confidence in the club forced itself to the head of the agenda.

The meeting began at 8am and wore on into the evening. It appeared that any announcement of a change at the top was being delayed until

the Stock Market reopens this morning. Such an announcement is bound to have an effect on the plc share price and therefore has to be announced to the market first.

Mr Shepherd flew to Barbados with his wife last Saturday ahead of further press allegations, and Mr Hall is a tax exile, living mainly in Spain.

Between them the two men own two-thirds of the club. Mr Hall controls 57 per cent through Cameron Hall, the development company started by his father and of which he is now chairman. Mr Shepherd owns 7 per cent through his Tyneside family engineering firm Shepherd Offshore.

Speculation in the City last night was that NatWest Markets, the plc's merchant banking adviser, was attempting to find investors to purchase a large part of the Cameron Hall stake.

Under an agreement signed prior to last year's flotation, the Hall family vowed not to sell any of its shares until this autumn without NatWest's agreement. However, NatWest is understood to be willing to allow the Halls to cut their stake.

Freddie Fletcher arriving at the meeting yesterday

Freddie Fletcher arriving at the meeting yesterday

Play it again: a novel sequel to Casablanca

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

ONE of cinema's greatest love stories is to be given a new beginning and a new end. An American writer has been commissioned to produce a prequel and a sequel to *Casablanca*, the classic wartime romance starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

The idea of reworking such a great movie, possibly the best-loved Hollywood film ever, may seem like sacrilege to some. But the public's appetite for sequels to their favourite movies or books have proved insatiable.

These latest books follow the success of *Gone with the Wind*'s 1993 sequel, *Scarlett*, which saw Scarlett O'Hara determined to win back Rhett Butler.

Nancy Wiese, rights director at Warner Books — which purchased the rights to the *Casablanca* characters and who was selling the book at the London International Book Fair yesterday — described *Gone with the Wind* and *Casablanca* as "the two



New future for Bogart and Bergman in *Casablanca*

great unresolved love stories". Beyond that, she added, the comparison fades "partly because writing a sequel to a film is a different process than trying to follow something already on paper. This book has got the film's feel for language and the visuals."

The author is Michael Walsh, whose first novel, called *Exchange Allies*, was a bestseller in America. Ms Wiese said: "For this, he's been muzzled. We don't want to say

too much until publication (November, in Britain). But he's done a ton of research. He's thoroughly researched the period and the history of the Second World War."

"He doesn't novelise the film, he references it. He starts the story where the movie left off and flashes back to events in the characters' lives."

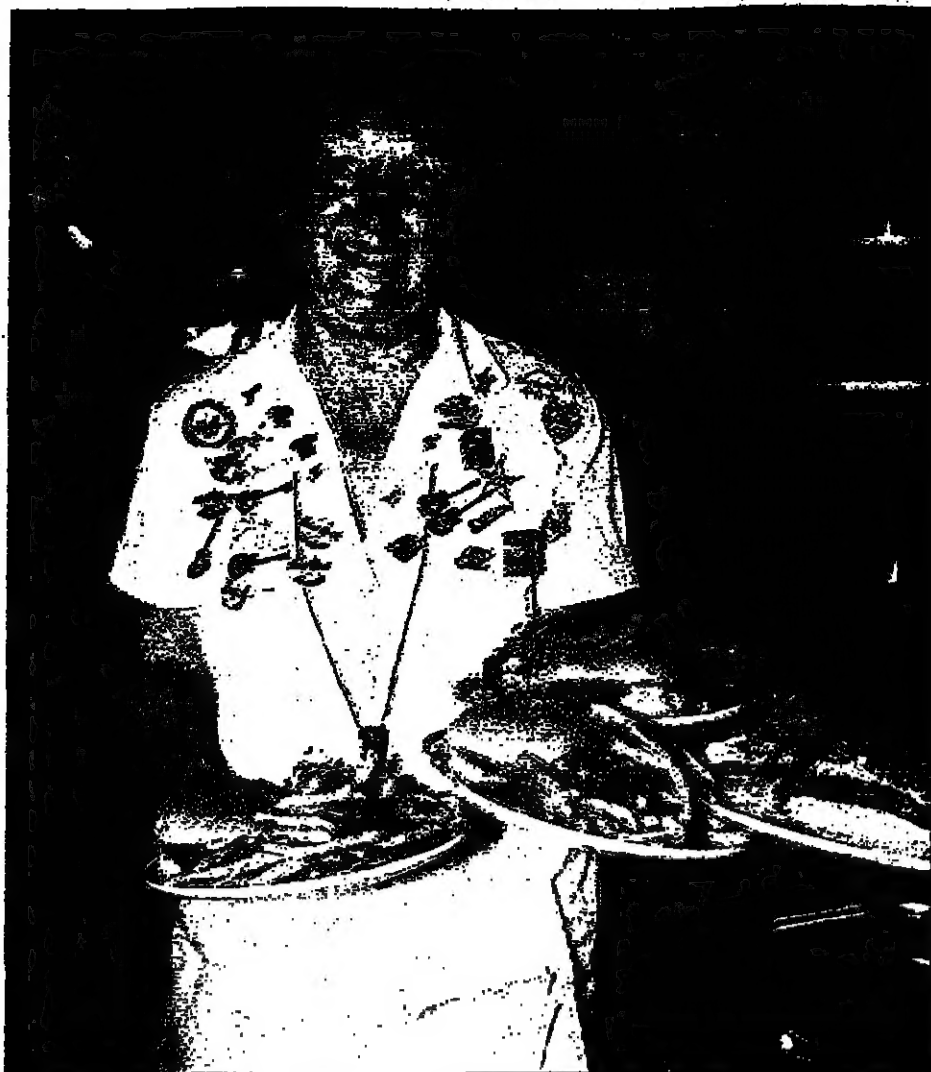
"I don't want to say too much, but he has developed the characters beautifully. You see Humphrey Bogart in this,

you see Claude Rains, you see Ingrid Bergman."

The original 1942 movie was based on a play that was never staged by Murray Burnett, who died last autumn embittered that no one remembered his work. He was eclipsed by the screenwriters, Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. Walsh's manuscript has been taken up by Philippa Harrison, chief executive and publisher of Little, Brown, which has acquired the rights for the British markets. As *Scarlett* was such a huge success, particularly in America, she expects this one to be as popular. "*Scarlett* was the 14th biggest book in 1993 in the whole of the English-speaking world. This book is a much better book."

Dr Hans-Peter Ubleis, president and publisher of Weltbild Trade Publishing Group, said that he had been so determined to acquire the German rights, he did so for \$500,000 (£330,000) without reading the manuscript.

Orange book prize, page 8



Rita Gilligan is both waitress and "cultural attaché" for the Hard Rock Café

They also serve who only rock and wait

A WAITRESS who has served many of the world's leading celebrities is to be awarded an honorary MBE for her services to Britain's tourist industry.

Rita Gilligan, from Co Galway, has worked at the Hard Rock Café in London since it opened in June 1971. Her customers have included Paul Newman, Muhammad Ali, members of the Beatles and the Spice Girls. While still waitressing in London three days a week, she now also travels to new venues as the company's "cultural attaché".

The Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, said: "Rita has given outstanding service to our tourism industry through her work at the Hard Rock Café and is renowned for combining efficient service and a lively approach. Over the years she has been deluged with letters of thanks."

Ms Gilligan said: "I never expected an award. I have always tried to make everyone enjoy their visit, whether they are a star or not, whether they order a T-bone steak or a cup of tea."

Pot-growing transplant man is freed

By A CORRESPONDENT

A JUDGE has allowed a liver transplant patient to go free after he admitted growing and using cannabis to ease his pain. Sympathising with him, Judge John Hopkin said: "I accept that's why you were growing it; to relieve the considerable pain you must suffer. That is against the law as it stands at the present time, but there is very substantial mitigation in your case."

Richard Gifford, 49, a father of six, was given a two-year conditional discharge at Nottingham Crown Court last week after pleading guilty to producing and possessing cannabis. The judge said: "Whether this substance should be obtained by prescription is a matter for Parliament. But it does seem from a number of cases that appear before me that it is of benefit to a number of persons."

Yesterday Gifford pledged to carry on smoking the drug: "While I am still alive, I intend to carry on using it," he said. His family doctor also backed his use of cannabis in a letter to the judge.

The court heard that police found cannabis plants, some 5ft tall, growing in Gifford's back garden in Nottingham.

Gifford said after the case that he first smoked the drug in 1968 after being medically discharged from the Royal Engineers because of a spinal disorder. He then contracted hepatitis and, in 1996, he underwent a liver transplant. His chances of surviving were

put at less than 40 per cent. At the height of his suffering, the former garage owner was smoking up 20 cannabis "joints" a day, drinking marijuana tea and even eating freshly picked leaves with his roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.

"I couldn't begin to tell you the amount of pain and suffering I have had to endure. But I was able, once I had the availability of cannabis, to stop using prescribed drugs such as morphine and other strong painkillers which are habitually addictive," he said.

Gifford's wife, Miriam, a clairvoyant, said she had never touched cannabis but would not hesitate to use the drug if she fell ill. Her husband said he had been buying it on the streets since the police cut down his 12 8ft plants. He has asked for a licence to grow the drug legally or be able to obtain it on prescription but he was turned down.

Medical experts have claimed that cannabis also brings relief to people with arthritis and multiple sclerosis, and stimulates appetites of AIDS patients.

Paddy Tipping, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said that the Government had no plans to decriminalise cannabis: "People like Judge Hopkin say they acknowledge there is a valuable medical effect, but there has been no compelling research done to suggest that."



Richard Gifford, left, admitted growing cannabis. Judge Hopkin gave him a conditional discharge

Magazine cleared of bias against man

By PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON

A JOURNALIST at *Woman's Realm* who claimed he was sacked because he was a man lost his claim for unfair dismissal yesterday.

Mark Howard, 38, former features editor at the magazine, was fired in September after turning up an hour late one day. He told an industrial tribunal at Croydon, South London, that, when he telephoned the office to say that his ten-year-old daughter had suffered an epileptic fit, Kathy Watson, his editor, had said: "Shut up, Mark. You're not working out as features editor. You're fired. I want you out of the building today."

Mr Howard, from Cambridge, had been close to the end of a three-month trial period for his £32,000-a-year job. He claimed he was

victimised because he was one of only three men in the workforce of 30.

He was told in a later dismissal letter that he had been sacked for poor time-keeping, bad management and an inability to operate in a team. He said that, until his sacking in September last year, he had received glowing reports. "My argument is that had I been a woman any perceived shortcomings would have been brought to my attention."

The tribunal ruled that there was no evidence to suggest his employers were guilty of sex discrimination. After the hearing, Mr Howard said: "I think it's disgraceful that any employer should treat staff in this way when their child is seriously ill."

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Legal aid 'only route for personal injury claims'

Two recent court cases highlight why the present system must be preserved, reports Frances Gibb

TWO accident victims awarded a total of £700,000 would never have received a penny under the Lord Chancellor's plans to scrap legal aid for personal injuries, solicitors said at the High Court yesterday.

Lord Irvine of Lairg plans to end legal aid for personal injury cases this summer and replace it with conditional "no win, no fee" agreements. However solicitors representing the two personal injury victims said their cases would never have reached court without legal aid.

David Bateman, a former paintsprayer who was left brain-damaged by poisonous fumes from a faulty gas boiler received £315,000 in an agreed settlement with British Gas.

Emily Furman, of the solicitors Miller Parris, said the case "could never have hap-

pened" without legal aid. The case had taken five years to reach court and it was "completely unrealistic" to think that any legal firm could do it with the conditional fee agreement method.

"This man would have got nothing and British Gas would have got away with it without legal aid," she said after the hearing.

Mr Bateman, 57, was found unconscious by his wife in the kitchen of his home in East Preston, Littlehampton, West Sussex, on December 21, 1992. Carbon monoxide gas from the central heating boiler changed him from a happy, outgoing personality into a "moody, unpredictable and aggressive" man, Mr Justice Aillon said.

British Gas finally admitted liability last week and agreed the Potterton Kingfisher CFSO



Lord Irvine: plans to scrap legal aid system

boiler was prone to faults and needed frequent maintenance. Ms Furman said British Gas knew about the problems with the boiler in 1986 but did little to warn their engineers about the dangers of the heat exchange flue blockages.

In the second case, Darren Taylor, from Newbury, Berkshire, was awarded £375,000 from insurers for the injuries he received in a traffic accident

in January 1991, when he was 19. A spokesman for his solicitors said he was able to bring a claim for compensation only because he was granted legal aid in 1991.

"The Legal Aid Board has funded all costs and will now be reimbursed in full. Darren's family fully acknowledge they could not possibly have funded this claim without legal aid and are dismayed, like thousands of others, at the Lord Chancellor's proposals to abolish it for those who have been injured in an accident through no fault of their own."

A legal expert said these were just two examples where legal aid was the only avenue open to injury victims.

The Bar Council yesterday also expressed concern about the Government's plans. Daniel Brennan, vice chairman of the Bar Council, said that "no win, no fee" agreements would cost more than the Government estimated and the extra cost would increase lawyers' charges.

Law, pages 39, 41



Harry Smith at work in the clay silt at the entrance of the Duke of Bridgewater's tunnel under Manchester

Explorer of lost tunnel pledges to defy ban

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

AN AMATEUR industrial archaeologist, who has spent 25 years digging out the Duke of Bridgewater's "lost" tunnel running under the heart of Manchester, has threatened to defy planners, who want to block the entrance, under a new development.

Harry Smith, 64, from Winsford, Cheshire, is obsessed with solving the mystery of where the canal — built in the 1760s to ferry coal across the city — once emerged and what secrets lie entombed 30ft below the city centre.

The former coal miner, a stalwart of Winsford Industrial Archaeology Society, has devoted his spare time to darning the entrance in the Castlefield area of Manchester so that he could drain the waterlogged tunnel. He and fellow enthusiasts have dug 50ft through clay silt, retrieving 18th-century beer bottles and jam jars, but Manchester City Council has now ordered him to dig no further.

City planners have served an enforcement notice and ordered the diggers to be off the site by the weekend. Mr Smith fears that the entrance will be blocked for ever beneath a fashionable canalside complex. "They will turn it into another one of those silly cafes," he said. "The idea is that they will put a glass bottom under the cafe so diners can look down and see the tunnel entrance."

"There's a wonderful mystery down there, but it may never be solved if the council acts like vandals. There could be anything down there — nobody knows. Historians

have sought in vain over the years to find the planning records for the canal. All I am interested in is getting to the end of it so that I find out exactly where it goes."

Mr Smith warned the authorities that he would go to great lengths to achieve his ambition and he has some secret locations where he could dig through to the tunnel and carry on the work clandestinely.

The Duke of Bridgewater is believed to have started work on the tunnel in about 1760 so that coal, mined in Salford, could be transported easily across the city. In its day, the tunnel held 5ft of water and was wide enough for two canal boats to pass.

It was built as a spur from the Castlefield basin, now the centre of Manchester's cafe scene, and runs under Deansgate. Mr Smith believes it crosses the city under Bridgewater Street and once emerged in front of the city's Victoria station.

If left undisturbed until 1973 when Mr Smith and his colleagues decided to match their research into the Victorian city's industrial heritage with their own spade work.

Manchester City Council, which aims to sell the land, gave the diggers until the middle of February to pack up. A spokesman said: "Unfortunately, Mr Smith has not complied with this and we will therefore be contacting him to ensure that he does."

Mr Smith insisted that he would continue to dig. "I want to get to the end before I die," he said.

Pop history with a scrap of difference

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A SCRAP of newspaper torn from a school exercise book in 1961 is expected to fetch up to £11,000 at auction next month. It is the only known example of a document with the autographs of all five original Beatles.

The signatures are those of Stuart Sutcliffe, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Pete Best, signing themselves with love to a now unknown girl named Diane. The Beatles were then playing regularly at the Cavern Club in Liverpool.

The autographs were signed before Sutcliffe left the group in Hamburg in July 1961 — he subsequently died of a brain tumour — and before Best was replaced by Ringo Starr. It was not until December 1962 that *Love Me Do* made the Top 20, reaching number 17, and the group began its rapid rise to interna-

tional stardom. Now the piece of paper, which measures about 3in by 5in, is being offered for sale by a private collector at a Christie's sale in London on April 30.

The auction house's pop specialist, Carey Wallace, said yesterday: "It is a pretty uninspiring piece of paper, but it is part of musical history. It is yellowing and there is a small hole going through the letter O of Paul McCartney's 'love', but the writing is still very clear."

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With the price of almost all the Land Rover Discoveries in our showrooms still at 1997 price levels, there's never been a better time to buy one. For a starting price of just £21,000, you can beat the 1998 price increase and become the master of everything you survey.

Actually, with Land Rover Freedom Finance, you can drive a new Discovery for just £190 a month (plus deposit and final payment, APR 13.9%). It couldn't be any easier. Simply choose the model you want. Decide on a deposit between 10% and 40%. Pick either a one, two or three year repayment period. Then, at the end of that period, you can pay the final payment and keep the car, hand the car back without anything else to pay, or put any remaining equity towards a brand new Discovery.

LAND ROVER DISCOVERY 2001 T40, 25 MONTH AGREEMENT		
£21,000.00	On the Road Price*	£21,000.00
£7,950.00	Deposit	£8,650.00
£13,550.00	Amount of Credit	£12,850.00
£198.00	34 Monthly Payments**	£6,632.00
£10,000.00	Guaranteed Future Value**	£10,000.00
£3,000.00	Final Payment	£3,000.00
£15,550.00	Charge for Credit	£4,712.00
£24,550.00	Total Payable	£25,712.00
13.9%	APR	13.9%

*Includes fully Road Taxed Vehicle, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Warranty, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Roadside Assistance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Breakdown Assistance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Theft and Vandalism Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Fire and Theft Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Windscreen and Glass Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Tyre and Wheel Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Paint and Bodywork Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Engine and Drivetrain Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Electrical Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Exhaust and Fuel System Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Suspension and Steering Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Brakes and Clutch Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Air Conditioning Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Radio and Stereo Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Alarm and Immobiliser Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Security and Locking System Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Lighting and Signage Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Maintenance and Servicing Insurance, 3 Year/50,000 Miles Parts and 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Britain leads way to higher zoo standards

A BRITISH initiative to end cruelty in zoos won European backing when environment ministers agreed to support legally binding standards of animal welfare yesterday.

British officials now hope they will be able to secure a framework directive in the summer to crack down on zoos, aquariums, bird gardens and dolphinariums in the European Union that keep animals in cramped, boring, and unhealthy conditions.

The directive will also set new standards for zoos to develop captive breeding and other conservation programmes for rare and endangered animals.

Three options had been on the table in Brussels. One, backed by the European Commission, was for a recommendation on improving the animal welfare of zoos. But this would not have been legally binding.

Another was to back a full animal welfare directive for zoos as supported by the European Parliament. However, the successful proposal, developed under the British presidency, was for a directive to aid the conservation of rare species but with provisions to set up a Europe-wide licensing and inspection scheme for zoos.

One British official said after the vote: "It is basically a conservation directive where animal welfare is brought in through the back door."

Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, said that the directive would allow zoos to work together more effectively. Some 230 zoos across the

EU inspection scheme will improve welfare of animals in captivity, writes Nick Nuttall

EU were working to conserve 150 endangered species including the Siberian tiger and the European otter.

The initiative, negotiated by Angela Eagle the junior Environment Minister, comes after years of campaigning by welfare groups concerned at poor standards in some zoos notably in Spain and Greece.

Unlike Britain, several European countries, still have no system for inspecting and approving zoos. Some countries have argued strongly that animal welfare should be a national rather than European issue.

Several unspecified member states continued to question the European Commission's right to set welfare standards because these are not enshrined in the Treaty of Rome. However, despite reservations, a majority of ministers voted in favour, "a very significant step forward", according to a spokeswoman for the Environment Department.

Earlier environment ministers agreed on a string of measures designed to combat air pollution and increase recycling. Under the Auto-Oil

Directive emissions from light vans of particulates — tiny flecks of soot linked with heart attacks and lung ailments — will be cut by about 40 per cent.

A solvent directive covering chemicals from dry cleaners to aircraft painting will cut emissions of smog-forming pollution from these industries by 57 per cent.

The Association des Constructeurs Européens d'Automobiles, which represents European carmakers, has offered to cut emissions of the global warming gas carbon dioxide by a quarter by 2008 below 1995 levels.

Mr Meacher, who was chairing the council of ministers meeting, said: "This is significant improvement on the previous figure they offered and we agreed that it was a good basis for negotiation."

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A dejected tiger lies in an Italian zoo — the sort of conditions the European directive aims to stamp out

Owner of big cats fights for their lives

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

TWO Bengal tigers and four other big cats face a premature end, after planners told their owner he could no longer keep them.

The three-year-old tigers, two leopards, a puma and a jaguar are kept at a theme park in the Cotswolds. But when Tim Spittle applied to build a new enclosure for them, he was turned down. Cotswold District Council then said that, because of safety concerns, he must stop keeping them in their fortified barn.

Yesterday zoo and veterinary inspectors visited Mr Spittle's Sleepy Hollow Farm Park near Blockley, Gloucestershire, to decide whether he should be allowed to keep the cats. He has said that they would have to be destroyed unless new homes could be found.

Mr Spittle's enclosures plan was vetoed by planners after some villagers claimed that "dangerous animals", including a lynx, had escaped from the park in the past.

Star's elephant plea may force circus to close

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

A FEDERAL investigation into alleged animal cruelty has begun into the world-renowned Barnum & Bailey Circus after a relentless campaign by the actress Kim Basinger, who says a sick young elephant was worked to death. If the charges are proved, the circus, now in its 117th year, could face a suspension of its live entertainment licence, possibly for up to a year.

The three-year-old Indian elephant, named Kenny, died in January in Jacksonville, Florida, from a viral gastrointestinal infection. An animal-rights group, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, alleges that it was forced to perform in the ring while sick instead of being allowed to rest and recover.

The group found a vociferous ally in Ms Basinger, who wrote repeatedly to the US

Department of Agriculture, which monitors whether circuses and zoos comply with the Animal Welfare Act. In one letter, she said: "This elephant most likely suffered more anguish and misery than we will ever know. As a mother myself, I cannot fathom the thought of this poor, sick baby cruelly and prematurely removed from his mother's side, being shunted from town to town in railway cars and shackled when not performing."

Alleging that Kenny had been forced to perform in three shows "although the circus knew he was ill", she called on the department to launch an inquiry, and to suspend the circus's performing licence as an interim measure.

Yesterday, Barbara Plughaupt, a spokeswoman for Ringling Brothers, which owns the circus, said: "We are deeply concerned about the falsehoods and innuendo being spread. We understand that there are people who believe that animals and humans should not be working together, and have taken an isolated incident to get their agenda out there."

The circus vet, Gary West, has also defended the group. He said: "This was a rapidly progressive condition, but he showed no serious signs of illness 36 hours prior to his death." The elephant died just when its condition appeared to be improving.



Basinger, circus denies her claim of cruelty

Arts therapy will have role in NHS

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

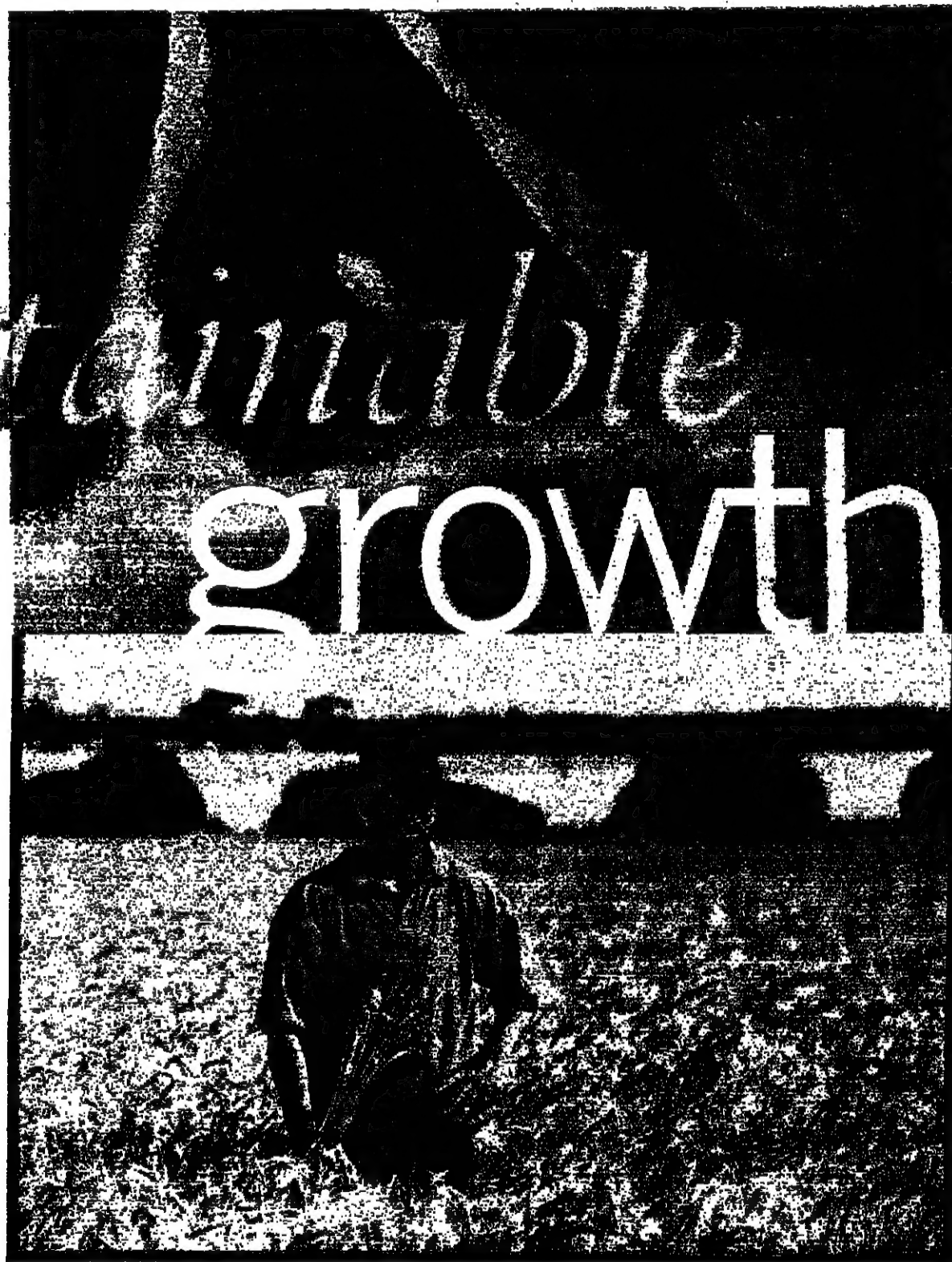
DANCE, music, literature, drama and painting are to be given a role in the National Health Service of the future. The idea is to harness the arts to help reduce depression and combat social exclusion.

Sir Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, was among a group of 40 experts who drew up the plan to bring the arts from the margins to the centre of healthcare planning and practice.

The idea is to increase professional education in the arts as therapy to complement the scientific and technological models that have been the main driving force of treatment for most

of the century. One member of the expert group, Robin Phillip, senior lecturer in occupational health and public health medicine at Bristol University, said the plan would prove cost effective. "We spend £81 million a year on anti-depressants and the cost per patient can be as high as £300 a year," he said. "If we can wean just a few of these patients off such drugs through the use of arts, then it will be worth it." While the therapeutic value of the arts in preventing disease has been shown through research, their capacity to enhance the quality of life has not yet been exploited by the NHS.

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Electoral fraud is 'rife in Ulster'

Africa urged by Clinton to pursue trade and not aid

The President's dream of a renaissance for the continent has set the stage for his six-nation journey, David Orr reports

HUNDREDS of thousands of well-wishers yesterday turned out to welcome President Clinton to Ghana, where he began his 12-day visit to Africa. In Accra, the capital, an estimated quarter of a million people cheered as he delivered an address extolling the virtues of democracy, trade and justice.

"We want to work with Africans to nurture democracy," he told the crowd packed into the city's Independence Square. "Democracy must have prosperity."

Then Mr Clinton walked down steps to shake hands of Ghanaians packed against metal barriers. The crowd surged forward, nearly knocking over the barriers to get to him, and Mr Clinton, with a look of consternation on his face, put his hands up and said: "Back up." Mike McCurry, the White House spokesman, said the President was delighted at what he believed was the largest crowd he had ever faced and had a one-word reaction to its size: "Wow."

The President praised Africans for the progress towards democracy being made on the continent. He also urged the youth of Africa to strive towards a better future.

"My dream for this trip is that together we might do the things so that, a hundred years from now, your grandchildren and mine will be back and say this was the beginning of a new African renaissance," he told the throng.

President Rawlings, Ghana's

elected head of state but formerly a coup leader stunned by Washington, welcomed President Clinton and his wife, Hillary, to the West African nation.

This is Mr Clinton's longest foreign trip and the first American presidential tour of Africa since Jimmy Carter came two decades ago. Three large aircraft are carrying the Clinton retinue, whose itinerary also features Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana and Senegal.

The tour is being billed as the start of a new relationship between Africa and America, a relationship based on "trade, not aid". As the Clintons were enjoying the first stage of their six-country safari, last-minute licks of paint were yesterday being given to buildings in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, which they were due to reach early today.

Major roads have been repaired, signposts erected, grass verges trimmed and flowers planted. Hundreds of destitute, most of them street children, have been taken off the city streets while vendors have been ordered to move their wares from newly surfaced pavements.

President Clinton and his wife will be in Uganda for two days. The presidential entourage will include three Cabinet secretaries and six members of Congress as well as the human rights activist, Jesse Jackson, and a four-star general. Kampala's leading hotels have been booked for weeks in anticipation of

Clinton saw the largest crowd that he had ever faced and was amazed



President Clinton is overwhelmed yesterday by Ghanaians trying to shake hands in Independence Square, Accra. Nearly 250,000 people came to hear him

the huge numbers of advisers, security personnel and journalists accompanying the President.

After attending a lunch hosted by President Museveni, Mr Clinton will head to Kiserwa primary school, north of Kampala, where he will give his only public address of his trip here. "He's making education the main theme of his trip here," said one Western diplomat in Kampala. "Primary education is the principal domestic issue for the Ugandan Government."

The mood in the Ugandan capital is incredibly upbeat with speculation that President Clinton will also put trade and debt relief high on his agenda.

Mr Museveni, a former Marxist

and ex-guerrilla leader, is seen as a strategic friend of Washington and a man who knows how to balance his books. His country has achieved one of the most dramatic economic comebacks on the continent.

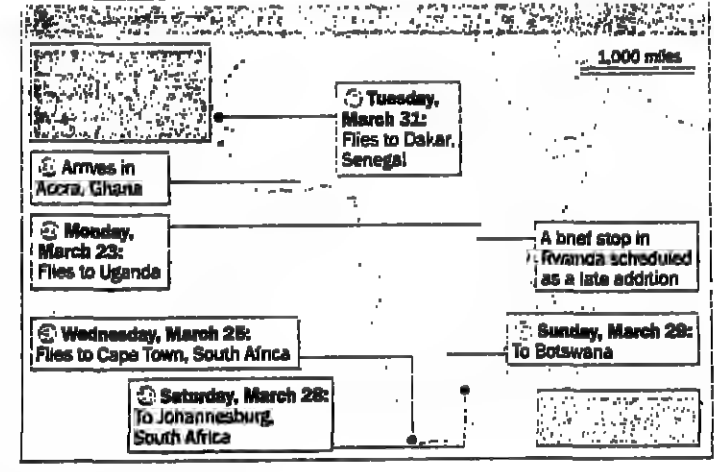
President Museveni's commitment to free trade and the eradication of corruption has made him a darling of the international donor community.

However, a Western diplomat in Kampala yesterday sounded a cautionary note. "The core content of the visit is minimal," he said. "It's activity rather than action, and the amount of money offered is going to be small. If the Ugandans think they're going to get a bon-

anza, they're going to be disappointed."

Analysis of US-Africa business relations are predicting improvements in American trade with the sub-Saharan region but few are talking of blockbuster deals as a direct result of the Clinton visit.

President Clinton will hold a meeting tomorrow with eight regional heads of state, principal among whom are leaders of the much-vaunted "new African order". With President Museveni as their mentor, the leaders of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda and Tanzania are seen as forging a revitalised identity for the continent based on independence and progressive thinking.



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Critics stir tardy Brazil to tackle Amazon blazes

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI
IN RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZIL yesterday launched a belated rescue operation in the Amazon by deploying 1,000 firefighters and starting aerial spraying to tackle the flames that have engulfed nearly 20,000 square miles of highland savanna and rainforest.

The fires have raged uncontrolled through the northern Amazonian state of Roraima for ten weeks, and a few hundred local firefighters equipped with two ageing helicopters have been unable to stop them spreading.

But international criticism of Brazil's nonchalant attitude to the worst Amazon fires this century seems to have spurred officialdom into action.

Water-carrying aircraft and dozens of helicopters fitted with 100-gallon water tanks were yesterday to begin spraying the worst affected cattle-farming region of Apatu.

"We are starting late, and it may take weeks to put out the



fires, but we realised that if we don't act now we will have an environmental catastrophe on our hands," said Major Edilson Oliveira, who heads the operation.

Neudo Campos, the state's Governor, said: "The fires are spreading so fast that, if we do not do something now, the entire state of Roraima will be wiped off the map."

Reynaldo Barbosa, who heads the National Institute of Amazon Research, a government body in charge of rainforest protection, also ex-

pressed alarm. "The fires have turned age-old trees and ecologically vital flora and fauna into charcoal... irreparable damage has been done." The carcasses of crocodiles, leopards and monkeys have been seen amid the debris near populated areas.

Local farmers who at this time of year burn forest cover to prepare cattle-grazing fields are partly to blame for the disaster, but the worst drought to have hit the Amazon this century is also responsible for the fires, which began in an agricultural district some 60 miles south of Boa Vista, the capital of Roraima.

But last week the fires spread to more sensitive rainforest areas, including the reserve inhabited by Yanomami Indians, the largest surviving Stone Age tribe.

Fires have also been detected in the ecological reserve around the village of Maracá, considered one of the most important sanctuaries of Amazonian flora and fauna.



Valdeia dos Santos, 15, surveying what the raging rainforest fires in the Amazon region of Brazil have done to his family's crops near Apatu

WORLD IN BRIEF

Thousands ill in forest fire smog

Jakarta: Thousands of inhabitants of the Indonesian city of Samarinda have fallen ill because of thick smoke from forest fires in East Kalimantan province, the Antara news agency reported yesterday. Visibility dropped to just over 100 yards on Sunday as people put on face-masks to beat the choking smog. Several thousands are suffering from eye infections and respiratory ailments, including asthma and pneumonia, the agency said.

A senior health official urged people to stay indoors. The fires have destroyed several thousand acres of forest near Samarinda and farther south around the oil centre of Balikpapan, also enveloped in thick smoke. (Reuters)

1,000 Tamils die for road

Colombo: A radio broadcast by Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels admitted that more than 1,000 guerrillas have died in battles to defend a key northern highway, which the military has been trying to capture in a ten-month-old campaign. If captured, the highway would give the military a land route to the former rebel stronghold of Jaffna peninsula. The military now moves all men and material by sea and air to Jaffna. (Reuters)

Gere backs hunger strike



Delhi: Richard Gere, left, yesterday backed the demands of six Tibetan hunger strikers that the United Nations appoint a special envoy on Tibet to resolve the territorial dispute with China. The Hollywood actor chairs the International Campaign for Tibet and is a disciple of the Dalai Lama's Tibetan Buddhism. He is a fierce critic of what he calls Beijing's "cultural genocide" in Tibet. (Reuters)

Rwanda nuns kidnapped

Kigali: Hutu rebels have kidnapped seven nuns and killed 20 civilians in separate attacks. A military officer in Gisenyi, 60 miles northwest of here, said about 30 rebels attacked a church-run health centre, killing three civilians and taking seven nuns hostage. Two hours later, another 100 rebels raided Kanama, setting the local government building ablaze and murdering 17 civilians. (AP)

Communists take Moldova

Chisinau: Moldova's Communist Party, opposed to market reforms, came top in parliamentary elections with just over 30 per cent, according to the Central Election Commission. The nationalist Democratic Convention had 19.36 per cent, the centrist Movement for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova 18.14 per cent and the nationalist Party of Democratic Forces 8.82 per cent. (Reuters)

Russia jails missile spy

Moscow: A Russian military court sentenced an army officer to 12 years in a maximum-security prison for trying to sell secret data about Russia's missile forces to an American security agency. Major Igor Dudnik, who had served with the strategic missile group in the Urals, was convicted of "high treason in the form of espionage". (AP)

Danish Cabinet reshuffle

Copenhagen: Three key ministers have retained their portfolios in the reshuffled centre-left Danish Government of Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, right. (Christopher Pollett writes). They are Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen, Finance Minister Mogens Lykketoft and Economy Minister Marianne Jelved. The Social Democrat-led coalition narrowly won re-election on March 11.



Seychelles President wins

Victoria: President René, 62, of the Seychelles was re-elected in a weekend poll with 66 per cent of the vote. His Seychelles People's Progressive Front won 30 of the 34 parliamentary seats. Official observers said the payment of large sums from social security funds before the vote had been "inopportune", but the vote had been free. (AFP)

Car driver, 104, charged

Stockholm: A 104-year-old Swedish man jumped red lights, smashed into parked cars and mounted the kerb during an outing in his 1968 grey Ford Cortina, Swedish newspapers reported. They said the unnamed man could be the oldest person ever to face driving charges. (Reuters)

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Pope 'at risk' from lack of medical help

THE Pope left Nigeria at the end of a three-day visit, leaving observers speculating whether he had performed a small miracle in surviving the trip, and amazed by the lack of medical provision made by the Nigerian Government.

The pontiff arrived in Nigeria where there is no hospital that could cope with caring for him if he fell ill — accompanied only by a retired general practitioner and his assistant.

Already suffering from what medical sources said was a "disease related to Parkinsonism", the Pope, 77, endured temperatures of more than 40°C (104°F) in the shade and 90-100 per cent humidity on his gruelling three-day tour.

Yet for more than four hours in the sweltering heat of Oba, where he conducted Mass on Sunday, he was not provided with any water to drink. His Vatican entourage had also failed to bring any water for themselves. The papal bodyguards were forced to beg two bottles of mineral water from members of a British medical team laid on by the Nigerian Government. The team, provided by London-based company Global Medical Care, had been asked by the Nigerian military regime to provide an air ambulance and trauma team including a surgeon, an intensive care nurse and a paramedic, to ensure that they were able to evacuate the Pope if he fell ill.

But the team, led by Wim Kools, a Dutch doctor, was not given a medical briefing on the Pope's condition by his personal doctor, retired GP Renato Buzzonetti. Dr Kools, who has 18 years of experience in the tropics, first met Dr

Bodyguards had to beg for water, Sam Kiley reports from Abuja

Buzzonetti during the Sunday Mass. Concerned that the Pope could dehydrate in the heat and humidity, the British doctors offered the Vatican team water for themselves and the Pope.

They were told that the pontiff, who occasionally slurred his speech and had trouble controlling a trembling left hand, did not require any water.

More worrying to observers was that the Vatican did not appear to know that the Nigerian Government had laid on trauma specialists to evacuate the Pope.

None of the normal protocols between doctors caring for a patient were observed. Dr Kools had no idea what, if any, medication the pontiff was taking — information which would have been vital in the event of a heart attack.

A cardiac arrest could have been brought on by the extreme heat. Dehydration was, Dr Kools said, the greatest short-term danger to the Pope. "A normal person uses about three litres per day. In these conditions the consumption would at least double," he said yesterday.

He also expressed surprise that the Vatican had made no effort to inform him about the Pope's medical condition, although his Lear Jet had been

specialised with intensive care, life-support and monitoring systems.

Dr Buzzonetti yesterday confirmed that it was normal practice for the Pope to travel with one doctor who carried his standard GP's bag but had no special equipment with which to resuscitate a patient in the event of an emergency.

The Pope left Nigeria reiterating his calls on the Government of General Sani Abacha to respect human rights and advance the pace of democratisation in the country.

There was no indication yesterday afternoon about whether the Abuja junta had heeded the pontiff's requests for clemency for about 60 political prisoners. Members of the Cabinet looked set to snub the Pope and said privately that they did not know of the list, which had been presented to Chief Tom Ikimi, the Foreign Minister, as well as the military leader.



Choir members sing for the Pope in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, yesterday

Pontiff driven on by firm belief in his mission

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE Pope's ordeal in the heat and humidity of Nigeria over the past three days is a reminder of the hazards the ailing pontiff — who will be 78 in May — faces as he travels the globe. Yet the "Pilgrim Pope" insists on keeping up a gruelling schedule, travelling with his personal physician, Dr Renato Buzzonetti.

The Pope's apparent ability to defy conditions from icy rain to scorching heat is due to three factors, according to Dr Buzzonetti: his tremendous willpower, his strong constitution and his belief in his mission. He is driven by what he sees as his mission to consolidate the Church and Christian values while also reaching out to other faiths in the run-up to the millennium. He says he "hopes to live to a hundred".

The trip to Nigeria — his eighty-second overseas journey since becoming Pope in 1978 — comes hard on the heels of his historic visit to Cuba in January, when he also endured a packed programme in high tempera-

tures. Later in the year he has trips scheduled to Mexico and Austria. "The Holy Father does suffer in hot and sticky climates," said Dr Corrado Manni, the Pope's anaesthetist. "But when he flies round the world he holds nothing back. It is hardly surprising if he looks tired sometimes."

Dr Manni and a team of surgeons led by Professor Francesco Cruciani are on constant standby at the Gemelli Hospital in Rome, part of the University of the Sacred Heart, where a papal suite is kept permanently ready.

Although visitors to Rome are often shocked by the Pope's physical decline, he has visibly rallied since Christmas, when he had to cancel Mass. The Vatican has never denied reports that he is suffering from a form of Parkinson's disease. He walks slowly and his speech is often slurred. But he appeared in good form before going to Nigeria, and walked unaided from his aircraft on arrival.

Six police injured in Kenyan student riot

FROM GEORGE MWANGI IN NAIROBI

THOUSANDS of students, dousing teargas, threw stones and burned cars yesterday, protesting against lower admission requirements to a medical school. One policeman was critically injured.

Witnesses said he collapsed after being hit on the head by a stone. Five more police were injured, three seriously, when they tried to break up the rioting crowd outside the University of Nairobi.

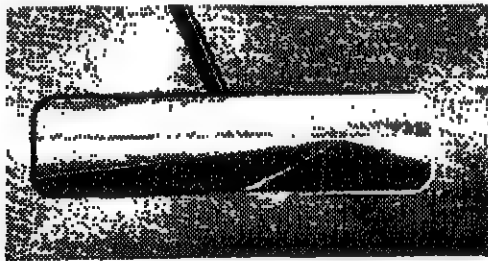
After a day of running battles, authorities ordered the closure of the university. About 3,000 students repeatedly chased away dozens of

riot policemen with stones and other missiles and then set fire to vehicles. They also badly beat a reporter from a newspaper owned by President Moi's Kenya African National Union party.

The university has said that high-school graduates with a C-plus average score will be eligible for admission to the College of Health Sciences. In the past, students were required to have a B-plus average.

Chris Bubo, the students' leader, said the authorities were cheapening the medical diploma.

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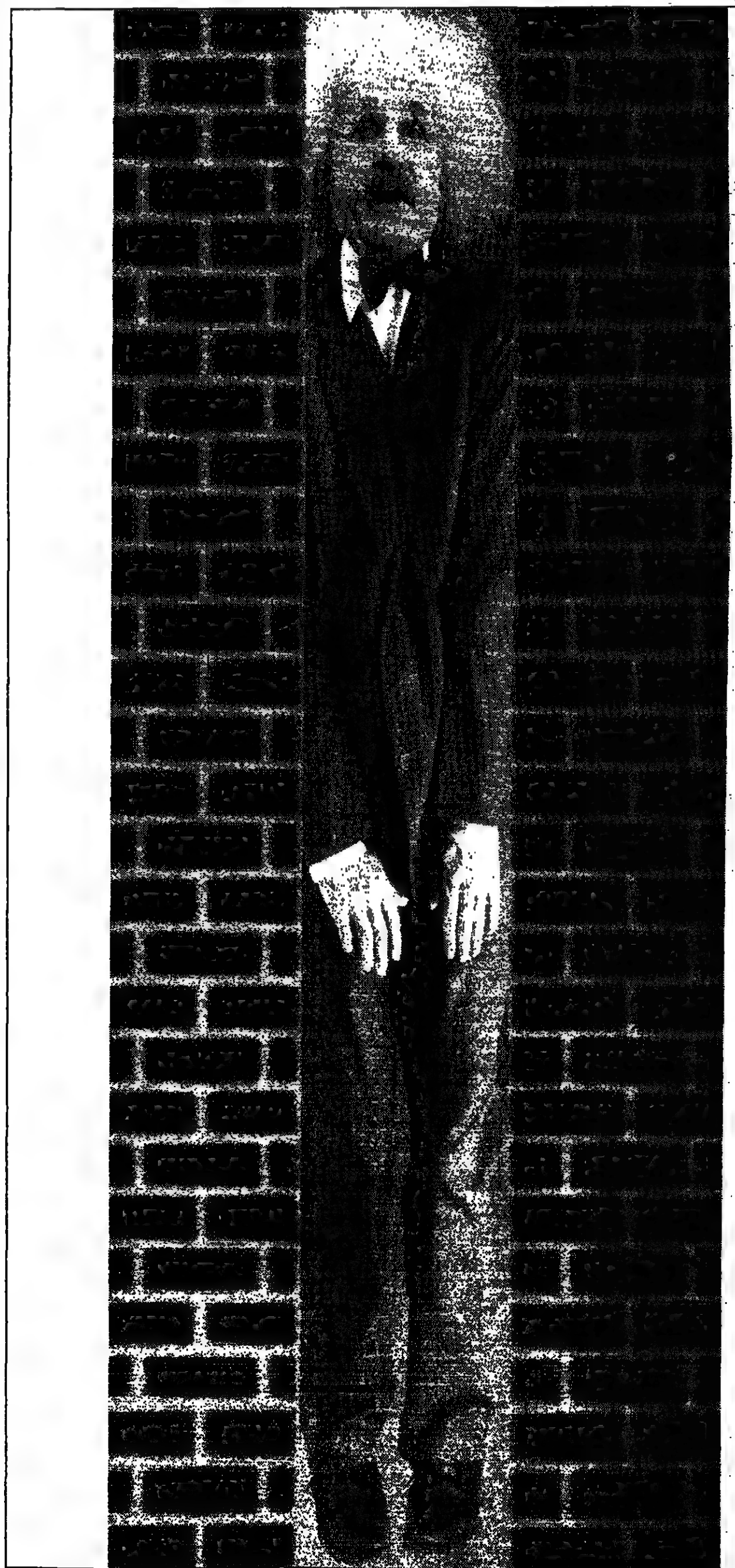
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My struggle to die with dignity

Jane Macdonald is afflicted by terrible diseases. She tells Anjana Ahuja why she has taken a lead in the fight for euthanasia

Last week Jane Macdonald booked a facial, a manicure and a haircut. "As my body deteriorates," she reflects, "I want to take extra care of the bits that still look good."

Jane, 49, has multiple sclerosis, breast cancer and osteoporosis. Multiple sclerosis, which strips the nerves of their myelin coating, casts the darkest shadow because its progress can be frighteningly swift. Within a few years, she has graduated from a walking stick to crutches, and her memory has wilted so much that once she failed to recognise herself in the mirror. Her efforts to lift a carton of home-prepared tomato juice from the fridge are accompanied by a strong tremor; she allows me to find a glass and do the pouring.

Her once-elegant 5ft 6in, 9-stone frame has shrunk to a little under 7 stones, a process accelerated by a low-fat diet which may, according to doctors, arrest the MS. Determined to avoid butter, margarine, cream and cooking oils, she gently rebuffs her husband Jonathan's chiding that she is overdoing it.

She has applied the same unwavering rigour to her views about death. "My absolute bottom line is that if I couldn't communicate, I wouldn't want to be alive," says Jane. She has even thought about how she would like to be — at home, alone with Jonathan, using a sequence of anaesthetics and paralysing drugs that would put her to sleep painlessly and permanently.

But whoever carried out those last wishes would be committing a crime. Euthanasia is illegal, no matter how loving or dignified the final moments. Now Jane, who is featured in a documentary tonight, is devoting her remaining energy to trying to change the law. She has been seen as the natural successor to Annie Lindell, a fellow member of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society (VES), who died from motor neurone disease shortly after the High Court awarded her the right to choose the timing and means of her own death. Annie, a singer and former air stewardess, managed to focus attention on this emotive issue because she was beautiful, vivacious and articulate. She died in December of natural causes.

Jane, who became friends with Annie, is a perfect candidate to take up the baton. Despite her frailty she, too, is a striking woman: her neat, fine-boned features thrown into sharp relief by a short crop of light brown hair. Before she retired through ill-health, she held a senior post in the organisation that oversees the teaching of nurses. Her experience has turned her into an eloquent and persuasive advocate for, as the VES puts it, the right to die with dignity. "There aren't many areas of life in which I can be fruitful. But when it comes to talking about voluntary euthanasia, I am a media man's dream."

Jonathan Pincus, 60, an occupational psychologist, met Jane when he was teaching her ("a dreadful abuse of power," she says with a smile), and the couple married in 1980. They have no children of their own, but Jonathan has two daughters, Daniela and Tamar, from his first marriage. He is even more forthright in his support for voluntary euthanasia. "It's a question of personal choice, which is terribly basic to my personal philosophy," he says. "If someone feels pain and indignity, it is our duty to provide a means by which they can end it, although, in Jane's case, I can imagine coaxing her to stay around just a little longer."

"But I can't imagine her wanting to go until she is in a pretty parlous state, and



Jane Macdonald is leading a campaign for euthanasia despite suffering from multiple sclerosis, breast cancer and osteoporosis. "If I couldn't communicate, I wouldn't want to be alive," she says.

by that time I would probably want her to go, too. It would almost be a joint decision, except that she has 51 per cent of the votes."

For now, the prognosis looks promising. She might even make it to 60. The low-fat diet appears to have slowed the progression of MS; after a mastectomy, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, the breast cancer is in remission. As well as Tamoxifen for the cancer, she takes drugs to treat the osteoporosis and to alleviate some symptoms of MS, such as spasms, night cramps and urinary problems. It may take her two hours to dress in the morning, but she can do it mostly unaided. Perhaps most important of all, she can still attend to her own personal needs. If she couldn't, she says, that might also prompt her to take her own life.

However, her definition of quality of life has become more flexible as she has deteriorated. Ten years ago, she says, she could not have imagined living like this. "I have tinnitus, and I choke on my food so I can't eat out," she says. "I might once have thought that using a wheelchair was unthinkable." She now uses one to get about outdoors.

She has contemplated suicide. "About 18 months ago I found myself looking longingly at tall buildings," she says. Now, she considers life worth living. "I think I lead a rich life, although it is becoming less so. But I can still love and be loved, and that's terribly important."

If voluntary euthanasia were legalised, might such changes of heart come too late? Her response is rational and considered: "As soon as I got these

suicidal feelings, I went to the doctor to check whether the balance of my mind was disturbed. He prescribed antidepressants, which I shall probably be on for the rest of my life. I think I will know when I am ready to go."

"I also think that if euthanasia was legal, we would make it so difficult that I believe it would be safe. Doctors would be able to spot if the relatives were trying to bump granny off." She would like to see three doctors involved, comprising at least

one psychiatrist and one appropriate specialist.

Jane insists that she has never questioned why she has been beset by such physical misfortune. "A better question is, 'Why not me?'" she says with a shrug. "And what on earth have I got to feel sorry for? I have had a successful career, a great marriage and two wonderful stepdaughters. Some people never know that."

Instead, she considers herself lucky that she was not struck down in her youth. The

first signs of MS, she thinks, appeared in 1976, when she was 27. She developed a sporadic problem with balance and started dragging her foot. She thought it might be a side-effect of giving up smoking.

Then a bout of incontinence struck. "I was in a lift at the time, and thank goodness I was on my own. I was absolutely terrified, but managed to go and get paper towels without anyone seeing me. It was the most humiliating thing that had ever happened to me," she says.

By the mid-Eighties, she was falling over more frequently. The incident that most sticks in her mind was falling on a pedestrian crossing in The Strand, in London, during the rush-hour one winter. "I could hear the traffic shriek to a halt. I couldn't move. A man pulled me to the side of the road and I lay in the gutter with my face cold and wet. People just walked by, even though I was quite well-dressed."

She didn't tell Jonathan, even though he had already noticed how Jane would clutch at furniture to steady herself. "I suppose I was ashamed," she says. "I put it down to clumsiness or stupidity, to Jane being daft again."

"Then I began to get other symptoms. I felt like I had an iron girder on, and one leg became weaker than the other." She began to wonder whether she was a hypochondriac, even though, during this time, her sister Kate, who is one year older, telephoned from her home in California to say that she had had MS diagnosed. By 1987, Jane's illness had been diagnosed. To outsiders, the couple

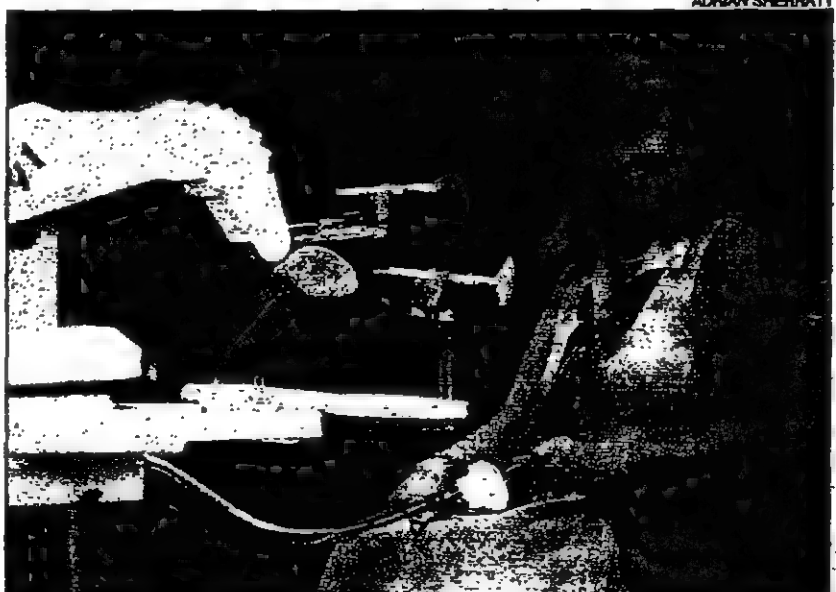
seem to have an indomitable spirit, fuelled by humour and gratitude for what they do have. But there have been tears. "Jane wept when she left her job, and again when she acquired a walking stick," says Jonathan. She defiantly chose the most stylish, expensive one she could find. Now it is the minutiae of everyday life that get her down. She has largely given up shopping because she has trouble signing a credit card slip. She gets frustrated when her voice-activated computer, which has long replaced her uncomplimentary fingers for writing poetry, doesn't respond. She loved dining out, but this, too, is a forgotten pleasure.

Jonathan says: "If Jane chokes and coughs up food at home, that's no big deal. In a restaurant, it's not pleasant." They had not to eat with friends any more.

If the law remains unchanged when Jane faces her final hour, both Jonathan and Jane's mother are prepared to grant her wish, even if it leaves them facing a murder or manslaughter charge. She says her father, a retired brigadier and committed Christian, "probably would not attend." She would like her ashes to be buried among past members of the Macdonald family in Cumnorham, three miles from Loch Ness.

"If I am told there is no space in the graveyard," says Jonathan, "then I shall come back with a hole in my pocket, with the ashes in it, and walk around in circles until my pocket is empty."

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Annie Lindell won a High Court ruling on the method of her own death

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What to do when you have a stroke

FIRST Princess Margaret and now the train robber Ronald Biggs, aged 68, have had a stroke in the past month. A woman friend of Biggs describes his troubles as exhaustion. His son, Michael, says that his father is unable to speak and has trouble moving his right arm. This combination makes a diagnosis of "exhaustion" seem either euphemistic or optimistic.

Stroke is the third biggest killer in the United Kingdom. A third of the 120,000 patients will have a second stroke within five years, and a half will have been left with significant disability. Recently a campaign, Stop A Stroke, was launched in London. The meeting was addressed by Professor Charles Forbes of Dundee University.

Some of the stroke victims will have such a minor attack that the symptoms clear within a day or two and additionally, there will also be those who have not had a stroke but a TIA, stroke-like symptoms that last for a matter of minutes or hours. A patient who has had a minor stroke, or even a TIA, has the most to gain from careful treatment to prevent a second episode. Despite this, Professor Forbes told the conference that in the UK only one patient in ten was adequately treated after a first attack.

Patients should expect to

have their blood pressure taken after a stroke, and to have a full biochemical and haematological assessment so that any anaemia or other abnormalities in their blood cells, as well as biochemical problems such as a raised cholesterol, can be excluded. However, Professor Forbes says: "Many of our patients

funny clothes and was incoherent, that he must be drunk from the excess of the night before. Left untreated in a side cubicle, his level of consciousness began to fade and only with considerable difficulty was he able to attract attention, and have his oxygen restored."

Mr O'Kelly was paralysed on both sides and could not talk or swallow. Within a week, movement in his right side began to return, although there was little improvement on his left side for many months. During his recovery, Mr O'Kelly's moods fluctuated. When cheerful and his laughter infectious, he was allowed to mix with the other patients; when unreasonably fearful, he was quickly hidden behind curtains. For the first six weeks, he was fed through a tube but in time recovered sufficiently to be transferred to Bar's.

FIVE years later, Mr O'Kelly walks and talks without any obvious disability, although in the first hospital his family had been told he would never walk again. Mr O'Kelly had to fight such a battle to receive the care which has enabled him to return to normal life that he, now runs a charity (Different Strokes), aimed at helping the 10 per cent of sufferers who are not elderly. Victims, as well as modifying their lifestyle in general

and, in particular, will also need to fill their medicine chest. However, small strokes, the patients may need drugs to reduce high blood pressure. If the stroke was the result of a clot, and not a bleed, they should take aspirin whose action is enhanced if taken with an anti-clotting agent, Persantin dipyridine.

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From pop icon to new wave green warrior

Andrew Ridgeley former star of Wham! has a new identity as an eco-campaigner. Interview by Bill Frost

His hairline has receded sharply and there are life-in-the-fast-lane furrows on the perfect face that once stared so insouciantly from a million bedroom wall posters. But as retired pop icons go, Andrew Ridgeley has looked after himself rather well.

The hell-raising days of drinking, clubbing and womanising are long gone; so too are any ambitions to rekindle the phenomenal success he enjoyed as one half of Wham! — the British double act of the Eighties with sales in its heyday of more than 30 million records. The one-time teenage heart-throb has swapped the limelight for obscurity and transformed himself from rake to reclusive eco-warrior.

Ridgeley, 35, has given up his peripatetic lifestyle — Los Angeles one day, Monaco the next — for an isolated farmhouse in North Cornwall and a stable relationship with a woman and her child by a previous partner.

An accomplished surfer, now he campaigns on behalf of a pressure group dedicated to cleaning up our beaches and coastal waters.

"We have a responsibility to future generations, a responsibility to keep the sea clean," says the man who co-wrote *Careless Whisper*. "Our group, *Surfers Against Sewage*, is a frontline ecological lobbying force, and I am completely committed to the cause and all the unorthodox tactics we are sometimes forced to use."

The primrose-yellow farmhouse near Wadebridge, where he lives with Keren Woodward, a member

of the all-girl group Bananarama, is hard to find — a labyrinth of narrow lanes protects the couple from the outside world. An ancient labrador and feisty little terrier make up the final line of defence.

Ridgeley chose the location carefully and the locals, normally ill-disposed towards incomers, protect his privacy. Ask for directions and you will be told that he has moved.

Bruising encounters with the media in the past have made Ridgeley understandably wary. Parodied with partner George Michael by *Spitting Image* as a pair of dancing buttocks, dismissed by showbusiness writers as "the untalented half of Wham!", and mocked for his attempt to go solo, he is now determined to regain some of his dignity.

Crashing Formula Three racing cars, squiring expensive women and stuffing shuttlecocks down tight white shorts before going on stage are a dim, distant and unwelcome memory. Ridgeley now listens to the shipping forecast and prays for waves and clean water.

"I started surfing a few years ago, but it was a while before I realised that there was a problem with the water quality. Then, my brother and I both got badly sick when we surfed off Newquay."

"Excrement and sanitary towels were floating in the water — no wonder we both became ill. I just thought something must be done and *Surfers Against Sewage* was the only organisation willing to take up the fight."

There is a messianic light in his dark brown eyes when he speaks of



Looking green and clean, Andrew Ridgeley today during a break at a surfing competition

the sea. But then surfing saved Ridgeley — he took up the sport when all hope of being a solo rock star or racing driver had gone.

After Wham! split, George Michael went on to scale even greater heights of creative and financial success. In stark contrast, Ridgeley appeared to be on collision course with personal disaster — a man with a mission to self-destruct.

Keren Woodward's influence and the affection he has for her ten-year-old son, by model David Scott-Evans — have transformed Ridgeley from juvenile party animal to concerned adult

and parent. "It is our duty to enable the young to swim in the sea in safety — the discharge of sewage into our coastal waters is unacceptable," he says.

Keren, as suspicious of the press as her partner, will not be drawn on his involvement with *Surfers Against Sewage*. "Don't ask me about that, I am not really involved," she says, hovering watchfully in the kitchen.

Plainly, she is protective of her man. His bad image went before him but she was willing to forget the tabloid headlines. In the past, he was only seen with the most

desirable women on his arm. "Sex is my driving force," he once said. It would be cruel to confront him with the past today. He has chosen rural tranquility and monogamy in favour of hedonism and excess.

The pine table in the couple's spotless kitchen is strewn with correspondence, perhaps royalty statements or tax demands — Ridgeley still makes £10,000 a year from *Careless Whisper* alone. But how much money he has after the profligate years remains unclear. Five years ago he spoke of leading a more frugal lifestyle. "I'm not rich now — I have to work for a living,



Andrew Ridgeley and George Michael in their Wham! heyday

it's as simple as that. But I don't need a nine-to-five job, it's not as bad as that."

According to Simon Napier-Bell, the former manager of Wham!, Ridgeley made about £2 million when he retired after four years at the top, aged 23. He probably made another £10 million from record sales in 1986.

However, industry gossip has it that much of his fortune was wasted on wine, women and racing cars. His final commercial venture — a restaurant and bar in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire — sank without trace.

Ridgeley has said that the Wham! years left him a comfortable financial legacy. "When I say a legacy, I mean royalties — and long may they continue!"

He says today that he is living "a dream existence" and never gets bored. "There are so many things one can do down here. We thoroughly enjoy the countryside and the lifestyle here," he told *Hellon* in a recent interview.

However, on the day we meet he seems distracted. There are no waves on his favourite beach, just a listless swell lapping jagged rocks.

Naturally enough, the conversation turns again to surfing and clean water. "There is still such a long way to go before we have achieved our goals," he says.

"The problem is exacerbated every year with the influx of holidaymakers in the summer months. The fact is that we cannot go on discharging sewage into the sea without paying a very high

price. We in *Surfers Against Sewage* may be regarded as eco-warriors, but what is wrong with that? Surfing may seem like a hedonistic business — in fact, we are in the front line, protecting the environment and trying to get a high profile for our cause."

"You do what you can to improve the environment, to ensure that the public knows the extent of the pollution around our shores. Someone must fight to avert the catastrophe by showing the water companies there is more at stake here than just the profit motive — it's our health and the health of future generations."

So has Andrew Ridgeley changed? Ironically, it always seemed as though George Michael would be the one to withdraw from the world.

As Simon Napier-Bell said: "Andrew loved every minute of Wham! and he created it as a great adventure."

"But George was always very introverted about the music business. Whenever we went out for meals together, all George wanted to talk about was his songs."

"With Andrew, things were a lot more relaxed. He would talk about motor racing and his girlfriends."

Today, Ridgeley himself is unwilling to speak of his previous incarnation as brawling satyr. The past is another country he would sooner forget. "I think I have been accepted here in Cornwall, despite the insularity of the community. This is a place I care about, a place we must protect for the future."

Never mind the Oscar, where's my freebie?

Simon Hounsou had a vivid demonstration last night of what it means to be a movie star at Oscar time. Six years ago he was homeless on the streets of Paris. Two years ago he scored a lucky break, being chosen to play the lead in Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*.

To the dismay of many, he was not nominated for an Academy Award for his role as leader of a slave-ship mutiny, but he was asked to be a presenter — the first known Oscar appearance by a citizen of Benin, in West Africa.

In return for intoning a few words as they rolled up the teleprompter ("The nominations are... The winner is...") Hounsou received what must be the world's ultimate goody basket: a wicker hamper groaning with sponsors' gifts worth thousands of dollars, including an £542 Tag Heuer sports watch, a £160 Mont Blanc fountain pen and a £74 Steiff teddy bear.

Tacky? Somewhat. More useful than a statuette? Undoubtedly. In fact, Hounsou and his fellow presenters may be forgiven for thinking they were the real winners last



In return for intoning a few words Oscar night presenters can walk away with gifts such as a Mont Blanc fountain pen

The unexpected winners at the Academy Awards ceremony are the presenters, says Giles Whittell

night. For 30 seconds' work they were guaranteed global exposure and handsome take-home presents without the prospect of becoming nervous wrecks. But there is more to these hamper than an innocent expression of the Academy's gratitude.

It was no coincidence that while this year's Oscars boasted no notable black nominees, last night's show fielded three high-profile black presenters — Hounsou, Denzel Washington and Samuel L. Jackson. Their appearances revealed the Oscar presenters' real role in the age of TV ratings: to boost the star turnout in carefully calculated ways so that the Oscar broad-

cast satisfies each ethnic, demographic and pop cultural niche in its huge audience.

Antonio Banderas, we can assume, was there for the viewing pleasure of Hispanics and women aged 28 to 38. Drew Barrymore was chosen for her large cross-gender teenage fan base. Martin Scorsese lent gravitas, which the Oscar organisers crave. Comedian Mike Myers was on board to undermine that gravitas and Matt Damon was a presenter as well as a nominee because he is the hottest name in town and something had to get him on stage.

Of these, only the Damon wunderkind had anything to



Gift: Tag Heuer watch

do with the year's big Oscar races, but all were crucial to producing a please-all telethon with ratings approaching those of the Super Bowl and advertising at £330,000 per 30 seconds.

Which is where the gift baskets come in. The self-important Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which runs the Oscars, likes to have its pick of suitable talent

when choosing presenters. But it dislikes the thought of paying them. Brand names keen to be associated with celebrities have willingly filled the breach.

This year sunglasses, perfumes, cognac, silk scarves, champagne, CD players and two flavours of vodka were gift-wrapped for each presenter along with the watch and pen and teddy bear.

Even for icons such as Sean Connery, who presumably has everything, such trinkets should make handy Christmas presents. But there is one quid pro quo: presenters have to look the part.

"It began ten years ago," says Fred Hayman, the official fashion policeman for the Oscars. "The stars had been dressing down and for a while it was hip to be Plain Jane. But that was before my time."

Short, dapper, 75 and Swiss, Mr Hayman wears wrap-

around shades even inside his sprawling Rodeo Drive boutique, and speaks with a clipped trace of a European accent. When reminded of the occasional sartorial stunts presenters and nominees have pulled — a frock made of gold credit cards, a £10 outfit from The Gap — he becomes impatient.

"That was not appropriate," he snaps. "They won't do that again. It would just be too embarrassing." He has no formal sanctions in his arsenal; just cajolery. "Stars are individuals," he says. "They can do as they please, but they have agents, managers. It has worked. The glamour of Hollywood is intact again."

But only just. The most successful piece of product placement in the maelstrom of Oscar hype this year followed the humiliation of a Golden Globe winner caught literally with her pants down when she should have been at the podium last month. Within days, every Oscar presenter and nominee had received in the post a bottle of a well-known anti-diarrhoea drug.



Matt Damon: a presenter as well as a nominee

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Yeltsin leaps into the abyss

These sackings can only make Russia even more weak and dangerous, says John Lloyd

Earlier this month Boris Yeltsin was given a report prepared for him by the Interior Ministry — whose police make up the largest security force in Russia. It rehearsed a catalogue of horrors — increasing disaffection from government, widespread evasion of all responsibilities to the State, especially tax payment, despair about the future. Well-known themes in today's Russia.

But one element was new, and very alarming. The report claimed that significant numbers of the population — generally young men — would be prepared to take up arms against the State if things got much worse. Armed insurrection, it seemed, could be in the offing.

This intelligence, not published in Russia, galvanised the presidency. It proved to President Yeltsin that the situation was dangerously unstable. It revealed that the reform process was not just resented, but actively hated — as were the reformers. Something had to change, and be seen to change.

The political process in Russia is often represented as a struggle between conservatism and reform.

This element exists, to be sure, but under the Yeltsin presidencies, it has been rendered ever more shapeless. The dominance of clans clustered round the main financial and industrial groups — such as Logovoz, headed by Boris

Berezovsky, or Unsubbank, headed by Vladimir Potanin, both men who have in the past served in high office — has made Russian governance a constant round of deals and arrangements, periodically disturbed by eruptions of jealousies or grubs for more power and wealth.

In this atmosphere of deeply corrupt cronyism, the reformers — including the radical former First Deputy Prime Ministers Anatoli Chubais and Boris Nemtsov — were simply another clan, and a "Western" one at that.

The dominant figure under Mr Yeltsin was Viktor Chernomyrdin, his Prime Minister for the past six years. Immensely durable, publicly dour, a former Soviet Gas Minister and Russian Energy Minister, Chernomyrdin has in recent months made increasingly clear his presidential ambitions after 2000, when Yeltsin's second — and last — presidential term ends. Yeltsin has always reacted vigorously to a threat: when threatened with a putsch in 1991, he stood on a tank and defied the putschists. When threatened by a parliamentary revolt in 1993, he sent in the tanks to smother the rebels from the parliament.

He has done the same again. He called Viktor Chernomyrdin in to the Kremlin on Sunday night to tell him that he had proof he had enriched himself from the privatisation of Gazprom, the

Russian gas monolith, the Prime Minister once commanded. He asked him to resign. Chernomyrdin refused. He was thus fired.

With one bound, Yeltsin is free once more. But it will be a precarious freedom. His acting Prime Minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, is a reformer — for what that description is worth — but wholly without a power base of his own, and thus entirely dependent on the President (which is how he likes it). The man who has kept reform on the rails since 1991, Anatoli Chubais — specifically named, with Chernomyrdin and Anatoli Kulikov, the Interior Minister, as individually dismissed together with the whole Cabinet — is out, following a downgrading a few months ago after allegations of corruption.

Yeltsin wants to dilute and tame discontent by showing himself the master — and the ouster — of the corrupt politicians of Moscow's inner circle. He wants again to be seen as Boris the Slayer of a governing class which has lost the people's trust: able to govern until the end of his term; even, perhaps, to stand for a third (unconstitutional) presidential term, if his health holds out.

But it is the last thing Russia needs. It puts into the political arena a vengeful man who is more determined than before to recover the power they need to bolster their fortunes — and to protect them against charges of corruption brought by their political enemies. It will put the budget once more at the heart of power moves. It will shake the fragile and marginal recovery in the economy, as a grudging little growth gets under way.

Will it save Yeltsin? For the moment, he controls, still, the levers of state power and force. But he has, for years, been surrounded by flatterers and yes-men — and he has governed less and less, preferring to retreat into one of his many homes to fish, hunt and drink with his cronies.

In that environment, it seems, he has come to believe that he, and only he, can save Russia. He has, to be sure, some claim for assisting Russian independence in the past. But he is now a man of rapidly falling powers and rapidly declining popularity, whose broadcast yesterday on his assumption of executive power was shaky and edited together — because he cannot sustain a continuous broadcast of several minutes.

Boris Yeltsin can no longer run Russia. He has fired the man who, however incompetently and corruptly, did. He has leapt into an abyss; we do not know how the pieces will fall. But we do know that it will weaken Russia, and make it more dangerous at the same time.

John Lloyd is associate editor of the New Statesman.



A time to die on screen

I have a piece of Mexican pottery, a traditional earthenware plaque of three faces. At the centre is a young, smooth face. It looks through another face, which is split in half on either side of a rind being peeled away. The face is old and deeply wrinkled, and framed in its turn by halves of another face. This third, outermost face, is a skull.

The meaning of the piece is clear: it is a *memento mori*, a robust reminder of the way we all go, crafted in a country which still sells sugar skulls on the Day of the Dead. But it also means the reverse: that the most never forget that the old were once young, and the dead once lived.

Every skull contains within it a bygone baby, just as every baby will one day be a skeleton. These are hard, strong lessons, but worth learning if you can muster the nerve and the humility to accept the grisly, playful Mexican truth. I have to admit that this particular plaque does not live permanently on my desk.

As a matter of fact, it lives by the television, and this could hardly be more appropriate. A small storm is raging round the forthcoming BBC series *The Human Body*, to be broadcast in May and presented by Lord Winston. It takes the seven physical ages as its theme, and in the final programme the main subject dies. This should not be a surprise, but the future arises because — with his own consent and his family's — he dies right in front of us, on screen.

Robert Winston wrote powerfully in this newspaper defending the programme. He says it is done with maturity, responsibility, and delicacy and constitutes a tribute to the dead man's courage and the achievement by all concerned of a "good death".

A howl of protest rose. The *Daily Mail* said the scene was "sure to distress recently bereaved families". The National Viewers and Listeners' Association demanded that the BBC reconsider the programme and averred, sight unseen, that the programme would not "take on board the sadness, grief and emotion involved". The spokesman added: "I wonder what the people connected with the person who has died will feel when the programme goes out. I don't think it is appropriate. This righteous desire to spare strangers hypothetical pain is curious; even though Lord Winston assures us that the widow approves the broadcast,

We should be glad that this death, at least, won't be trivialised by television

the Viewers and Listeners' Association thinks she should not, and a spokesman for Cruise Bereavement Care said that warnings should be transmitted before the film.

Elsewhere, a more serious commentator said that there is "nothing to be gained by watching the death of a stranger on television", because the experience will not be fully real to viewers, and because the medium is "inherently sensational" and will inevitably be encouraged to screen other deaths, "each more outrageous than the last". And Robert Robinson, writing in the *London Evening Standard*, strikingly argues that however delicately you do it, with however clear a permission, to watch death is voyeurism — "a kind of theft", because you win the right to see such moments only by paying "the high price of actual involvement... and that belongs to the man's family alone".

This is a debate worth having. Oddly enough, it is better to have it now than after we have seen the programme. Once it is screened, the issues will be confused by reviewers' questions of production and aesthetic merit, and by a natural unwillingness to say anything remotely critical of the real family involved. But now, talking about it in a vacuum, we can speak of principle: Are we over-sensitised about death? Do we want to break the taboo by showing how it is on television? If not, why not?

Take, first of all, the objection that it might upset other recently bereaved families. With all possible delicacy, I have to say that I think this is patronising baloney. The portrayal of a dignified, gentle, loving and expected death, within a close community, is less likely to be upsetting than any average evening's television. Drama, news, and even comedy, feed endlessly off death. Somebody who has recently stood by a grave is far more likely to be upset by a grisly thriller about morgues and post-mortems, or by Harry

Enfield's "Mr Dead" coffin sketches, than by Lord Winston's gentle, doctorly approach. We allow ourselves to trivialise death in comedy and zap past corpses and near-corpses in the news. We speculate flippantly about what scripted and will be brought to the characters played by soap stars who have really died; we thrill ourselves with autopsies and exhumations and hospital drama. It seems hard that an attempt to take one death seriously should meet with such pious outrage.

Robert Robinson's argument about "a form of theft" is more subtle and persuasive. The passing of a spirit has always been seen as something solemn and significant. You could argue that a man's unique death is diminished by the phantom presence of several million craning strangers.

saying "Is he gone yet?" But you can also argue that because "Paul", the dying man, fully understood what he was doing, then this programme is not a form of theft but a form of gift. His bequest to the nation could be considerable: a reminder to a generation fed on violent images that most deaths are neither violent nor premature, but a natural passage. We need this reminder. Our perceptions have been so distorted by film and television that it is not unknown for modern children, told of a death, to say "Who shot him?"

It should be noted that Dame Cicely Saunders, founder of the hospice movement, welcomes the screening, and says that dying is as natural as being born, that the dying need help and support, and that it should be a family affair. Somebody has to reiterate these human truths because modern pagans have allowed the fear of death to grow beyond reason: we hide it in hospital technology, fight it uselessly for too long, and cripple ourselves with embarrassment trying not to mention it socially. This last is a shamefully British disease. I once met an Irish friend after some years, knowing that

he had lost a child in the interim, and found myself dumbly unable to mention it. Leaving him, I banged my head against a wall for a while then walked back in to the room and said: "I'm sorry. It's because I'm English. Shut again." Then we talked about it. If this televised death helps ease that inhibition, then we may take it as a gift, and be thankful.

The other, really interesting thing about the debate is not what it reveals about death, but what it reveals about our opinion of television. The constant tone among the objectors is of contempt: television, "cheapens", is "inherently sensational", "can only degrade", turns everything into showbiz and is a "slippery slope", where every rule broken opens the gates for something worse, or "being left out". Economically, the new EMU-zone, now generally described in financial markets as "Euroland", will naturally be very much bigger than Britain. But, unless size is seen as a virtue in its own right, Euroland will not be a particularly attractive merger partner. Since Britain will be Euroland's single most important export market, it will be very much in the interests of the EMU members to preserve EU-wide free trade.

There is truth in all these allegations, indeed, I have used most of them myself whenever I rail against the televising of court proceedings. Nor would I allow most directors within a brick's throw of my own life, even for the oily assurance that it would "help others". It is impossible to deny that a great deal of television is now morally and aesthetically revolting. We have become used to the incoherent, betrays of fly-on-the-wall documentary, the obscene thick-skinned laddishness of light entertainment, the voyeuristic horrors of *The Jerry Springer Show* and *Oprah* and their British clones, and the insatiable appetite of TV drama for all that is psychopathic.

This is why Lord Winston should not wonder why people are leery of his perfectly serious, well-intentioned programme. It is on television, that is why. It has been damned purely by association with the medium: a medium where in the past 15 years even the publicly-funded BBC has been pressured into believing that its decent and careful programmes are not enough, and that it has to compete desperately for ratings at the jartiest level it can find.

That, not the death film, is what should be worrying us. Television, can be a high art and a force for good. But it gets harder every day to remember that.

Libby Purves

Adventures of Tony in Euroland

Anatole Kaletsky

warns Blair not to trust the French

When Tony Blair goes to Paris today to address the French National Assembly he will be speaking in a strictly British capacity and not as the temporary President of Europe. This is just as well, since the French Government has repeatedly expressed its disdain for Mr Blair's pretensions to be seen as a leader of Europe. As Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French Finance Minister, said on Sunday: "The only way to be a leading country in Europe is to belong to the euro-zone." The influence of Britain in the European Union will therefore be "smaller than it could be", in M Strauss-Kahn's uncharacteristically diplomatic understatement. M Strauss-Kahn is, of course, quite right (the French always are about Europe).

The single currency is now a fact of life. The final meeting of European central bank governors which must confirm the process of convergence and appoint the 11 founder members of EMU will take place today in Frankfurt, as Mr Blair speaks in Paris. On Friday morning, the last remaining bulwark of Eurosceptic wishful thinking will collapse, when the Bundesbank submits its report to the German parliament recommending that EMU should go ahead and that the mark should be abolished.

Economic and Monetary Union (as we must now learn to call the single currency arrangement) will not just be a single monetary zone. The single currency, single interest rate policy and the new European Central Bank will produce a full-scale merger of the European economies into a new kind of supranational political conglomerate.

Britain has refused to take part in this economic merger and has therefore stayed out of EMU. This means that Britain will not be a shareholder, and that Mr Blair cannot expect a seat on the board of directors, as the French keep pointing out. This is all perfectly obvious and perfectly fair. The mystery is why anyone in Britain should object, or even care, about "losing influence", or "being left out".

Economically, the new EMU-zone, now generally described in financial markets as "Euroland", will naturally be very much bigger than Britain. But, unless size is seen as a virtue in its own right, Euroland will not be a particularly attractive merger partner. Since Britain will be Euroland's single most important export market, it will be very much in the interests of the EMU members to preserve EU-wide free trade.

Britain's standards of economic management cannot be expected to match those attained by Germany, and France in the past. With Italy, Spain and Portugal as founder members of EMU, and with Greece now offered a virtual guarantee of joining, Euroland will be nothing like the expanded EMU zone once imagined by the Bundesbank and still officially advertised by Helmut Kohl. Once Greece joins the single currency and claims its seat on the European Central Bank, the four Mediterranean countries will have the same number of votes as Germany and its three reliable monetary allies — The Netherlands, Austria and Luxembourg.

The balance of power will be held by three small countries — Ireland, Finland and Belgium — and the one major country which has emerged yet again as the undisputed champion of European diplomacy, France.

EMU was always a French inspired project and as the starting day approaches, the extraordinary determination in Paris to push through this political and economic merger is becoming easier to understand. EMU was always designed to "lock" Germany into Western Europe and eliminate the monetary dominance of the Bundesbank, but it looks like achieving much more than that. Because Germany will enter the single currency at a time when its domestic costs are still exceptionally high, German industry will be hobbled for many years ahead, offering tremendous competitive opportunities for the industries of France, northern Italy and other advanced regions of Europe.

Even more importantly, especially from the French standpoint, the political design of EMU institutions, based on one country, one vote, and making no additional allowance for national populations or economic power, will place Germany and its North European allies in a natural minority on any issue over which they disagree with France.

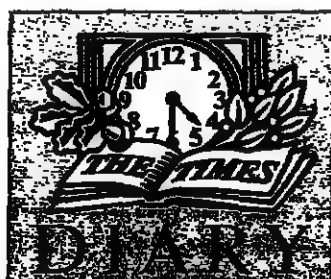
This brings us back to the question of political power and influence on the global stage. Joining EMU will undoubtedly boost the global influence of France, just as it will diminish that of Germany. But what would it do for Britain? Even assuming that maximising global influence (as opposed to national freedom of manoeuvre) is a major priority for Britain, Mr Blair should ask himself (and perhaps M Strauss-Kahn) a simple question: "Who has more influence on world events — the Governor of a large American state, such as New York, California or Texas — or the Prime Minister of a major independent nation such as Canada or Japan?"

Royal secret

PRINCE MICHAEL of Kent is making secret trips to that most troubled land, Russia. Having learnt the lingo, the Prince, a cousin and lookalike of the assassinated Tsar Nicholas II, returned home last week after his third visit tending to the child burn victims of Moscow's streets. In his charitable endeavours, the big bear has teamed up with two new friends: Norma Major and Naina Yeltsin, the formidably constructed wife of bad Boris. "Prince Michael is wonderful with the children, many of whom are not a pretty sight," says Carolyn Cripps, of the charity Friends of Russian Children. "He sits on their beds and chats away in Russian in a very relaxed manner. He comes in a private capacity and is very unassuming." Mrs Major has been equally humble. She has organised the sending of linen and toys to Moscow after visiting the victims in hospital. Naina Yeltsin has been a little less keen to assume a proletarian role, but she will visit London in May for an opera fundraising bash at Drapers' Hall. Assuming, of course, her old man has not been turfed out of the Kremlin, stiff vodka in shaky hand.



Still, I hope Prince Michael has no plans to emigrate. He has become involved in *The Potential of Russia*, a business magazine, and is now patron of a museum paying tribute to the old Russia, which, with regal enthusiasm, collects everything down to the late Tsar's dinner-service.



the belly; we shut all the windows and still couldn't hear it because of the racket outside. The dogs don't like it either. Might he not find Southend more congenial?

So Derry rude

THE Lord Chancellor is having second thoughts about allowing even a select group of visitors admire his new pad. Lord Irvine of Lairg has instructed his private office to ring up guests who had accepted invitations for his little soirees to inform them that their presence is no longer required. A senior barrister, who was looking forward to attending the Woman-kind Worldwide official public opening, was surprised to hear that he had been classed a safety hazard. "They called me just beforehand and told me I was disinvited. They said they had put

so much furniture in the apartments that there wasn't enough room for all the people. The fire safety people were worried. It is the height of rudeness." Quite out of character.

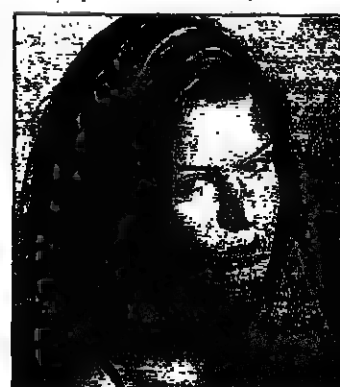
Home run

AS Boris Yeltsin clears out his Cabinet for spring, members of the Romanov dynasty prepare to step into the breach. Last December Yeltsin said he was ready to welcome back descendants of the imperial family, 80 years after they were turfed out and shot. He promised them a "formal status", including a role in state events.

The clan were keeping a close eye on events yesterday (rarely have they had so much fun since the pogroms). Prince Rostislav Romanov, a decent bloke, tells me that a restored monarchy would be the perfect balm for troubled times. "The country needs steadiness, which is why there should be a referendum on restoration," he says. The Russian people should be able to decide democratically, whether to have us back."

French lessons

BRUSSELS-dwellers have a stern new schoolmistress. Jacques Santer, the President of the Euro-



pean Commission, has appointed one Martine Reicherts as his chief spokeswoman, and on her first day yesterday she alarmed Anglophiles by demanding all-French briefings. Several are digging out their old Linguaphone tapes.

BAGGING a peerage has clearly helped Helena Kennedy to nurture her social conscience. The Labour QC, who now deluges in the handle Baroness Kennedy of



It seems to offer few dramatic possibilities, but a battle of the babes has broken out for the lead role in the film *Tomb Raider*. Liz Hurley, right, is fighting it out with Rhona Mitra, a Roedean dropout who advertised the computer game upon which the flick is based. Rhona thought the role was hers, but oddly Miss Hurley wants to play the all-action archaeologist, Lara Croft. Teenage boys, brimming with testosterone, will be excited; but this will not be one to trouble Oscars judges.

JASPER GERARD



THE YELTSIN COUP

Good theatre but poor politics

Boris Yeltsin was once a keen basketball player, and still enjoys wrongfooting his opponents. His dismissal of the entire Russian Government yesterday left the country and its bickering politicians bemused, and briefly handed back the initiative to the President. But his *coup de théâtre* may prove less dramatic than it first appeared, and could prove costly in the long run not only to the Russian economy but also to Mr Yeltsin's own dwindling authority. The stock exchange fell sharply on the news, and Russia was forced to postpone its first eurobond issue this year. Pressing decisions, too long put off because of Mr Yeltsin's illnesses, suffer a further wait until a new Government is in place. And after a brief hiatus for political regrouping the succession struggle will resume.

Mr Yeltsin's move follows a familiar pattern. Despite typically mendacious official statements that his health is "superb", few Russians are fooled. They know that his respiratory infection is only the latest in a series of afflictions that have kept him away from his desk for long periods and left vital affairs of state to drift. In the past he has bounced back, demonstrating the smack of firm government by sacking an unpopular official or denouncing his ministers in a robust live television broadcast.

His aim is to show himself in touch with the prevailing discontent and ready to cut through self-serving bureaucracy. But such populism yields diminishing returns. The offending ministers disappear for a few weeks, only to resurface later. A brief, well-publicised attempt is made to tackle such intractable issues as tax collection, local corruption and military reform before inertia and self-interest overwhelm good intentions. The President runs out of energy and voters run out of patience.

The dismissal of the entire Government may look like a more desperate response to a

more desperate deadlock. It was clearly prompted by Mr Yeltsin's fear of rivals growing too strong in his absence, and his pique at remarks by Viktor Chernomyrdin, his stolid, dependable Prime Minister, which hinted at previously well-disciplined ambition to succeed his boss.

But Mr Yeltsin may have had a more calculated motive. Next week the Duma, the stronghold of former Communists and anti-reformers, was due to pass a motion of censure on the Government. The likely resulting impasse could have been broken only by the dissolution of parliament or the Government. Mr Yeltsin chose the latter, thus depriving the Duma of the chance to scrutinise his ministers' performance. It is a new tactic in an old struggle.

Anatoli Chubais, the most intelligent but unpopular figure in the old Government, put a brave face on the reshuffle, saying it strengthened the reformist cause. The new Prime Minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, is an archetypal Young Turk — smart, educated and versed in Western ways. But at 35 he lacks experience and authority; it will be a long time before he or anyone else can assume the mantle of predictable dependability that made Mr Chernomyrdin such a reassuring figure to Western investors and policymakers. Many of the old faces will be re-employed. Some unpopular figures will probably not return: few will miss Anatoli Kulikov, the Interior Minister.

As long as Russia remains committed to reform, the West has little to fear from yesterday's reshuffle. But pressing decisions darken the Moscow horizon. A Russia preoccupied with political infighting and succession struggles is an enfeebled international partner, prey to investors' post-Asia jitters. Mr Yeltsin cannot rely on his old sporting nimbleness to outwit his opponents; he and his team need some quick scoring before their term is up.

NO MITIGATION

Ministers cannot neglect the mentally ill

Mental illness is a sentence in itself. Its effects can place the victim in a state more solitary and miserable than any prison architect could devise. Yet many of those in illness's grip are incarcerated in institutions which no prison architect could contemplate without shame. England's three top-security mental hospitals are grotesque warehouses for neglected outcasts. There will be no votes in spending the money necessary to close these institutions and transfer the inmates to appropriate new homes, but while it may not be one of the "people's priorities" it should be one of the Government's. The ugly nature of the crimes committed by many of these institutions' inmates should not blind ministers to the fact that the inmates are victims too.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with using Victorian buildings to house mental patients, any more than there is something inappropriate about a centre of medical excellence being based in the medieval surroundings of Bart's hospital or theoretical physicists working in All Souls. The faults of Broadmoor, Rampton and Ashworth are not primarily architectural but are, for practical purposes, only capable of resolution with a completely fresh start. The scale of the existing institutions and the manner in which they are managed diminishes both inmates and warders. As last night's *Panorama* made clear there is a punitive culture which permeates their walls and a turnkey mentality which afflicts many of the staff. The inmates may not be easily susceptible to therapy but the manner in which their institutions are run does not improve the chances. For the sake of the prisoners' health and the nurses' pro-

fessional dignity, a change to a more humane regime is imperative.

It will not, however, be easy. To replace three large institutions with six modern hospitals will require a considerable investment. It may be possible to sell the land on which the three secure hospitals currently stand but while Broadmoor, in Berkshire, might raise a healthy sum Rampton in north Nottinghamshire and Ashworth in Merseyside are unlikely to have the developers reaching for their chequebooks. If the new hospitals are to place treatment before punishment as well as guaranteeing public safety, then they are unlikely to be paid for by the sale of their predecessors.

Public consent for higher expenditure to improve the inmates' conditions may be difficult to secure, but not as difficult as public consent for the siting of new hospitals near residential areas. The health service managers behind reform hope that new institutions would allow inmates to live closer to their families, but how many voters will be happy to see Ian Brady and Peter Sutcliffe living closer to their own families? No matter how secure the new hospitals prove to be, there will be very few Labour MPs clamouring for their constituencies to benefit from the employment opportunities these institutions will bring. The Government may, in the circumstances, be tempted to leave well alone, but neglect will create its own problems. The former director of the High Security Psychiatric Services Board, Ray Rowden, has warned ministers: "Let it rumble and I guarantee you that two years from now you'll have another scandal." If ministers fail to act, then there will be no mitigating circumstances.

THE HUMANE ZOO

Britain sets a standard for the rest of the EU

Homo sapiens shares his planet with more than 30 million other species. These are not simply a resource to be squandered. They are an integral part of our lives and cultures. Their care and conservation matter. And Britain should be proud to be leading the way in calling for an improvement of conditions in European zoos.

Captive breeding programmes are a cornerstone of animal conservation. Natural habitats can no longer be guaranteed. Even now, fires in the forests of Borneo and the Amazon are laying waste to the environments of thousands of creatures. Indian farmers are encroaching on one of the tiger's last redoubts. War in Rwanda puts the territories of the mountain gorilla in peril.

If such species are to be preserved, if they are to continue to evolve as they have done for the past billion years, then zoos must evolve alongside them. British legislation demands uniquely high standards of care for animals in captivity. And of some 300 licensed collections, more than 60 are voluntarily associated with the Federation of Zoos, a self-regulatory organisation whose standards are higher even than the government minimum. The cruel and claustrophobic menageries of our Victorian past are phobic memories of our Victorian past are gone. The best modern zoos — London and Jersey are models — co-ordinate captive breeding with programmes in the wild. From the Sumatran tiger to the Fregate from the Grevy's zebra to the warbler cricket, dozens of endangered species are being preserved in this way.

But several European zoos are failing to meet expected welfare norms. Animals suffer acutely. Bears and big cats are imprisoned in pens so small and spartan that they are reduced to psychotic pacing. An elephant was found with festering wounds in Spain. In Athens two lions were cooped inside an aviary.

Yesterday the Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, took advantage of Britain's presidency of the EU to urge his continental colleagues to adopt a zoo directive, establishing minimum levels of animal care. At present only a handful of countries — Germany and Sweden among them — legislate to ensure this.

But proper conditions are vital to successful captive breeding. Brown bears languish if they are deprived of stimulation. Tigers may be resistant to cold, but they are fatally susceptible to damp. To make full use of the available gene pool, zoo directors need to be sure that they can loan their animals to other collections without fear that their health and wellbeing are at risk.

At the beginning of this year only two other nations favoured the proposed directive. Now there are ten supporting it. But it could still take years before anything is on the statute books. Britain, with its powerful animal rights lobby, cannot impose its own laws on its neighbours. Meanwhile, zoo reports could name and shame the worst offenders. Local people and tourists could choose not to visit or support any collections which fell short on their standards.

'Flawed' proposal on car taxation

From Mr Kerr MacGregor

Sir, The Chancellor's Budget proposal to penalise cars by the size of their engines is inherently flawed.

It is quite well known in automotive design, as Kevin Eason's report (March 19) pointed out, that there is no absolute connection between the capacity of an engine and the fuel consumption (and consequent environmental impact) of the car it propels. In fact when a car manufacturer offers a range of engines for a car it is often the biggest engine, turning more slowly and with more relaxed valve timing, which is the most economical and least polluting of the range.

Earlier this century British engine designers were constrained by legislation which taxed the diameter of a car engine's cylinders rather than their stroke or travel. This led to a generation of artificially long and skinny engines which were neither very powerful nor energy-efficient.

Yours etc,
KERR MACGREGOR
(Senior Lecturer in Energy Engineering),
Napier University, 10 Colinton Road,
Edinburgh EH10 5DT.
March 19.

From Dr Robert Davis

Sir, The advertisement by the Automobile Association (March 19) treats us to the unedifying spectacle of arrogance and self-pity from the bleating motorists complaining about having to pay about another pound a week.

Why should money from motoring taxation be completely paid back to motorists for more roads, or even to a public transport system sabotaged by long-term government support for motoring? We do not get money paid back directly to smokers or drinkers from their (much more highly taxed) practices. Higher earners do not get their greater sums of income tax — amounting to far more than motoring taxes — paid back to them.

Taxation on cars and fuel will need to rise dramatically to realise a necessary reduction in motor traffic. When it does, the revenue gained should be spent not just on rescuing public transport but either on greater public expenditure — such as on health, education and housing — or on lower income taxes and national insurance (particularly for the low-paid) and higher pensions, or both.

Yours sincerely,
ROBERT DAVIS,
97 Bryan Avenue, NW10 2AS.

From Dr W. S. Parker

Sir, The fundamental flaw in the anti-private car policy is the irreplaceable loss of expert time spent in waiting for public transport. To waste the skills of district nurses, plumbers, electricians and a host of others working in the community while they stand at bus stops instead of attending to the next job is just plain daft, not to mention the problem of the transport of tools and equipment.

To say that this day-to-day work could be compensated by some form of tax relief is not an argument acceptable to the employees of tight-fisted local authorities and others who have to cover a considerable part of providing a vehicle out of their own pockets. To work outdoors under all conditions of weather without a covered vehicle immediately to hand is to revert to prewar conditions.

Yours faithfully,
W. S. PARKER,
68 Ladies Mile Road,
Patcham, Brighton BN1 8TD.
March 20.

From Mr G. S. Ditcha

Sir, I was enthused before the last general election to learn of the Labour Party's integrated transport policy. Various proposals and legislative measures since the election have now clarified their plans; that is, if it moves tax it.

Yours motionless,
G. S. DITCHA,
100 Vaughan Street,
Leicester LE3 5JP.
March 20.

Masai 'battering'

From Dr Effa Okupa

Sir, Your report, "Wife puts Masai 'right to batter' on trial" (March 12), states that "Masai customary law and practice permit a husband to beat his wife".

When some African men behave badly they blame it on customary law, thus bringing customary law, the law of the majority of Africans, into disrepute. Even in England some men batter their wives, but their behaviour has nothing to do with the common law.

Indigenous law or customary law is *ius non scriptum*. There is no evidence that customary law sanctions the battering of women, apart from hearsay by violent men. Fortunately, many men, be they Masai, Dinka or English, do not batter their wives or partners.

It is not customary law that is on trial, but brutal men. I hope that the court rules against them.

Yours faithfully,
EFFA OKUPA,
The Afrika Studies Centre,
University of East London,
Longbridge Road,
Dagenham, Essex RM8 2AS.
March 13.

Workers as assets on balance sheet

From Mr Geoff Newman

Sir, In their annual addresses to shareholders, company chairmen are much given to declaring "our employees are our greatest asset". Why then is there no mention of employees in the balance sheet that follows?

I believe we should devise a method for putting the value of employees somewhere on this vital snapshot of the company's wellbeing. Even if banks turned their noses up, it would allow the company to make clear the value it places on its staff and assign a monetary value to them.

There are, for a start, two values that could be audited against a national scale and thus allow one company to be compared with another.

The first is the value of the current workforce's qualifications. All elements of the educational process could be assigned a value in a national register of training values: for example, a GCSE might be valued at, say, £50,000 (based on the cost of providing the education for that subject in that year divided by the number of pupils passing that subject, etc). For ease of comparisons between companies an "index" figure could be created by dividing the computed total "value" by the number of employees.

A similar figure could be produced for the amount spent on training employees by the company during the report period. The amount a company spends on training is a clear reflection of the value it places on its staff.

The creation of the national register

of training values should be possible from statistics already available. Such a move would transform the way we analyse balance sheets and enable those selling and buying companies to have the benefit of a nationally acceptable yardstick.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFF NEWMAN,
30 Mount Pleasant,
Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2DH.
March 23.

From Ms Helen Garner

Sir, The suggestion by Paul Tatham (letter, March 17) that the Government should gradually lower retirement age to 50 fails to acknowledge changing UK demographics.

Our society is inexorably ageing. The number of younger workers (16-24) has dropped by nearly two million in the last ten years. They will not be replaced. In the next ten years the number of 25 to 34-year-olds will be reduced by the same proportion.

Many UK employers fail to understand that the early retirement culture needs to be reversed not expanded. Others, fortunately, have recognised that employing people of all ages is the only way to guarantee their organisations' future competitiveness.

Yours faithfully,
HELEN GARNER
(Campaign Manager),
Employers Forum on Age,
1268 London Road, SW16 4ER.
March 18.

Reporting Parliament

From Mr Christopher Jones

Sir, Professor Bernard Crick's concern about the reporting — or non-reporting — of Parliament (letter, March 14) is understandable, but all parts of the media are culpable, not just the broadcasters. The *Times* long ago joined the other broadsheets in dropping its daily, full-page, reports of proceedings in the chambers. Although television cameras at Westminster were supposed to bring the work of Parliament into voters' homes, the coverage seems to have substantially decreased since the cameras arrived.

One of the reasons, of course, is the greatly increased manipulation of political news by governments, party organisations and by individual MPs through the lobby system. This is the system of pumping out favourable news through calculated leaks, sotto

voce conversations in corridors and bars, and daily off-the-record and unattributable briefings by civil servants and party officials. Straight reporting of parliamentary debates would be beyond their control.

Thus governments and parties hold all the cards, since any infringement of the lobby rules by journalists means that sources of news dry up and careers can be in jeopardy.

Nobody doubts that there should be some degree of confidentiality between journalists and politicians. But the lobby system is based entirely on secrecy which forces the media to play into the hands of governments and parties. It should be allowed to have no part in the life of an educated democracy.

Yours sincerely,
CHRISTOPHER JONES
(BBC Parliamentary Correspondent,
Radio and Television News, 1975-89),
26 Cranford Close, SW20 0DP.

Reserve forces cuts

From Commander N. R. Messinger, RNR (ret)

Sir, This nation's reserve forces have long provided an easy target for the knife-wielding Ministry of Defence "bean counters" (letters, March 18).

It is well documented that in 1939 Royal Navy officers despised the reserves, awarding the RNR the title "Really not required"; the RNR fared even worse, being branded "Really not very reliable".

On mobilisation, reservists serving with the Royal Navy not only had to contend with fighting the enemy, but also the prejudice of the British officer class. The distinguished author and historian, Len Deighton, admirably summed up the prevailing attitude in his excellent *Blood, Tears and Folly*, published in 1993:

When wartime's compulsory military service first sent civilians to sea, they regarded this narrow-minded, time-warped community [the Royal Navy] with awe. They took it over, and changed it forever... The sailors who fought and won the Atlantic battle were in the main civilians.

Tory party reform

From Mr Robert A. S. Gibbs

Sir, I cannot be the only paid-up member of the Conservative Party who is affronted by the artfulness of the recently distributed ballot papers and the request for a mandate for reform.

If the proposed constitution is to be the pre-nuptial agreement and pledge of even-handedness upon which hang the long-term happiness of the voluntary party within this "arranged" marriage, this bride intends to flee the perils of such a union.

Yours truly,
ROBERT A. GIBBS,
Little Hazely, Stratfield Mortimer,
Berkshire RG7 3PS.
March 23.

Posted abroad

From Sir John Wilton

Sir, It will be interesting to see which ambassadorial posts are chosen first for advertisement (report, March 23): Paris, Washington, Rome? Or Mogadishu, Kabul, Panama? And what the response will be.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WILTON
(Ambassador, Kuwait, 1970-74;
Saudi Arabia, 1976-79),
Legassick House,
69 Fore Street, Plympton St Maurice,
Plymouth, Devon PL7 3NA.
March 23.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

King's Library move 'essential'

From the Chief Executive of The British Library

Sir, Your correspondents writing about the King's Library (letter, March 19) have overlooked a fundamental reason for the move to its new home at St Pancras.

The British Library exists to care for, and make available to scholars of present and future generations, the world's greatest collection of written and printed material. Carefully controlled environmental conditions are essential to the survival of that material. The King's Library in the British Museum does not enjoy those.

To leave the collection there would have been to condemn it to eventual disintegration. By contrast, the tower which will hold the King's Library at St Pancras will provide optimum conditions for conservation. In addition it will ensure that the books, which are in continuing and heavy demand, will be available for consultation alongside the other parts of the British Library's collection stored at St Pancras.

The plans for the move of the King's Library have been in the public domain for the past thirty years. Three years ago the All-Party Arts and Heritage Group, following a visit to St Pancras, reported (*The House Magazine*, February 27, 1995):

At the heart of the Library and seen from all sides is a glass "bookcase" the height of the building which houses the magnificent "King's Library" of George III. We look forward to returning in two years to see the King's Library in place.

I am surprised to see a protest at this late stage, when the move of King George III's books is virtually complete.

The British Library is ensuring the survival of a key part of our intellectual heritage in a new building which will in due course, I have no doubt, come to be as valued as its predecessor.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN LANG,
Chief Executive,
The British Library,
96 Euston Road, NW1 2DB.
March 20.

Museum closure

From Mr Mark Barrington-Ward

Sir, The Chancellor in his Budget speech said that he wanted to improve access to our nation's museums and galleries and was giving extra money to help those that do not charge for admission.

But what about the plight of those that have long been forced to charge? As a member of the Friends of the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle I received today an urgent appeal from the chairman who is trying to raise £34,000 to prevent the museum from being closed for five months next winter.

Durham County Council, which took over responsibility from the original trustees, is under such financial pressure it says it cannot keep the museum open all the year round. Twelve staff would go.

The Government has recognised that the museum at Barnard Castle is an institution of national importance, but has not yet followed this with any financial help.

The importance of the collections can be seen by anyone visiting the splendid exhibition of regional treasures now at the Royal Academy. The Bowes Museum has lent no fewer than eight paintings, including El Greco's *Tears of Peter* and Goya's portrait of his friend Meléndez Valdés. Its collections of furniture and china are equally outstanding.

If the public are denied access to them for five months next winter, it will be a national scandal.

Yours sincerely,
MARK BARRINGTON-WARD,
8 Apsley Road,
Oxford OX2 7QY.
March 18.

Modern Christianity

From Mr Nigel R. MacNicol

Sir, Of course Christianity is unliveable in the 20th century (letters, March 18 and 23); it always was. Tradition holds that only one person in the last 2,000 years has succeeded in living it 100 per cent — Jesus Christ.

That the rest of us keep practising it has much to do with the fact that, as with ballroom dancing (but unlike golf), forgiveness for the shortcomings is readily available from the Partner.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL MACNICOL,
9 Church Lane,
Greatham, Ockham,
Rutland LE15 7NF.
March 23.

Poles apart

From Lord Brightman

Sir, May we please have a photograph of penguins in the Arctic to match your charming photograph (Weekend, Travel, March 21) of the two bewildered polar bears lost in the Antarctic?

Yours faithfully,
BRIGHTMAN,
House of Lords.
March 22.

History and expertise on show

Peter Brown introduces a two-page report on the British Antique Dealers' Association and its annual fair this week

I suppose the nearest equivalent to the BADA fair," says Antony Preston, "is the Chelsea Flower Show. At both shows everything is beautifully laid out under a very smart marquee. There's a colour theme, carpets, flowers, a restaurant. They've got the same leisurely feel about them. There's no pressure to buy, but if you see something you really like you can walk around the fair and compare it. We have 87 members exhibiting."

Mr Preston's enthusiasm is natural: he is chairman of the British Antique Dealers' Association (BADA) and the seven-day fair which begins tomorrow at the Duke of York's Headquarters off Sloane Square, West London, is its annual showcase.

BADA's unique selling point is its expertise. There are almost 9,500 dealers in Britain, but BADA's membership is restricted to 400 of the most knowledgeable. Some dealers may have relatively few pieces in stock, but they will really know their stuff.

A series of talks is given at the fair, mainly by BADA members. This year's subjects are silver, clockmaking, floral displays, animal and bird paintings, stained and secular paintings, boxes, wood-

en artefacts and liquor-drinking vessels. For the first time guests can join experts for lunch each day. On Friday, Michel Roux, of the Waterside Inn at Bray in Berkshire, will present a four-course dinner and talk about the changes in eating habits he has seen.

Mr Preston is himself the model of a modern antiques dealer, with City suit, mobile phone and a shop in Stow-in-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, where he sells mainly English and continental furniture. Ask him about market trends and his eyes light up.

"It's a lot to do with fashion and price. American collectors, for example, like the colonial look formed by the early settlers. American federal furniture, the equivalent of our late 18th-century Sheraton and Regency furniture, is rather different from our own."

"Different decades bring different fashions. Silver had a hard time at one time. So did clocks. Oak furniture suffered when the Dutch and Belgians stopped buying it in the mid-Seventies. High-quality items of almost any discipline are in fashion now, but they have to be pleasing to the eye, and have domestic appeal. Someone who wants a desk will want drawers and somewhere to put a computer."

But why should someone who



Model dealer: Antony Preston, BADA chairman



George III chest (H.C. Baxter), £12,500

wants a desk go to the BADA fair, rather than a saleroom? The answer, says Mr Preston, is simple. In the showroom, the buyer shoulders the risk. At the fair, the dealer has already taken it.

"If the dealer has made a mistake, you can get your money back. If he argues, you can ring up BADA and they'll tell him to repay you. We arbitrate in that way. It's just normal integrity."

Antiques fairs allow the dealers to compete with salerooms for public attention as well as enabling the public to compare prices (most

items at the BADA fair, says Mr Preston, will be price-tagged; all will be vetted for quality).

With Peter Brooke, MP, the former Cabinet minister, at its helm, the British Art Market Federation is lobbying hard against European Commission proposals to double VAT on art imports to 5 per cent. If the tax goes up, says Mr Preston, "we're going to lose a lot of business to New York, Geneva and Monaco".

Another threat is the Artist Resale Rights Levy, a tax on contemporary work which the

European Union wants to introduce in Britain next year. "It's an imposition," says Mr Preston. "If, as a struggling artist, I sell you a picture, you take a gamble in buying it. Why, when I get more well known, should you have to pay me a percentage when you sell?"

These are understandable sentiments from a dealer who values freedom in world trade. For the moment, the British art market remains almost tax free. The prices at the spring fair will certainly compare favourably with most of the EU.

HISTORIANS point to the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars as a watershed for Europe between conflicts driven by dynastic and religious politics and wars fuelled by the hatred of peoples.

Witney Antiques, specialists in samplers, is more precise and seems to blame *The Times* for the change. In 1808 this newspaper sent Henry Robinson to the Peninsula as one of the first war correspondents, and his reports helped fire the patriotic passions of the British people.

In that year a young woman named Hannah Stephenson embroidered a sampler showing "The Englishman" on a black horse preparing to shoot "The Frenchman". The Oxfordshire dealer is asking £5,000 for it at the BADA fair.

From the same period comes a rare 4½-in-high blue transfer-printed jug, brought to the fair by Gillian Neale of Aylesbury. It carries a political message which resonates today as then: "Grand Protestant Association of Loyal Orangemen Honour all Men Love the British King Honour the King. Derry and no surrender. Anglin and the Boyne". Another piece on Neale's stand is a Mission football decorated with a blue-and-white transfer of Verona and dating from about 1825.

The Wimbledon glass-specialist Mark West offers a group of English and French mezzotint portraits from the early 19th century which have price tags ranging from £400 to £2,000. An exotic wine glass on the stand is an 1850s red overlay example.

Art forged to fire the nation



Dr Syntax tree'd by a bull (Andrew Dando), £725

decorated with vines by Bacchus & Sons of Birmingham.

In a nice touch, Andrew Dando of Bath not only has a Derby porcelain figure of Dr Syntax tree'd by a bull, but also a number of Rowlandson's aquatints for William Combe's satirical poems on the career of the Quixote of the Picturesque. The prints are priced between £45 and £55. The figure will be rather more.

HUON MAILLIEU

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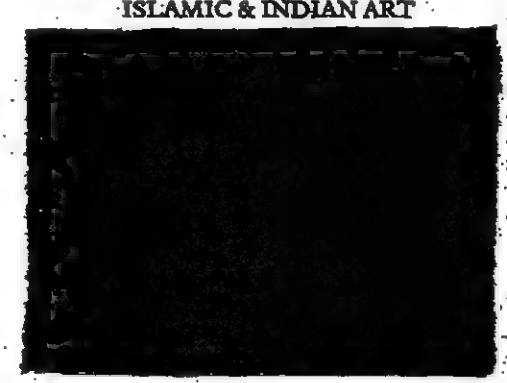


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Swaggering still life

While every sense is catered for by the exhibits in a big antiques fair, taste, or at any rate food and drink, is emphasised as a principal ingredient in this week's BADA show at Chelsea.

Indeed, it is tempting to speculate whether the programme of browsing and slouching, in the form of a talk and demonstration dinner by Michel Roux, a charity champagne dinner and a masterclass on drinking vessels entitled *Holding Your Liquor*, came before the gustatory exhibits, or vice versa.

The art of the still life is essentially concerned with time, life and death, and food is often used to display the bloom of freshness while hinting at the imminence of decay. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity," or in the Vulgate, *Vanitas vanitatum*, giving us the term *vanitas* still life.

The most obvious symbol of transience is the skull: more delicate intimations are conveyed by highly scented flowers, pipe smoke and tobacco ash, delicate insects, musical instruments with broken strings, fragile glasses, the bloom of grapes or peaches and the zest of lemon. The textures of such things, together with gold and silver and exotic shells, provide the painter with opportunities to swagger.

Raphael Valls, of Duke Street, St James's, has a fine example by Cornelis de Heem (1631-1695). The son of a still life painter, he was born and died in Leiden, but passed most of his career in Antwerp. His still life of *Fruit with Oysters*, a

Crayfish and a Roemer on a Table measures 15½ in by 21½ in and is priced at £150,000. Is there a hint of vanity in the overturned carter, for sugar or spice, behind the roemer (hence the English "runner") of wine?

By the time that Hector Caffieri (1847-1932) painted his *Boulogne Fishmarket* such symbolism had



Detail: Edouart silhouette, (Frank Sabin), £9,000

been lost, and a display of texture and colour was the sole purpose. This is shown by John Spink, the watercolour dealer of Fulham, who also has a number of fine examples of earlier English artists including William Payne, with a Cornish view dated 1789, and a John Frederick Lewis of Amalfi.

Other senses and sensations are

the concern of *On Board a PBO*, although along with sun and breeze on skin, there might be a hint of lunch and a glass to come. The oil sketch by Sir John Lavery is shown by Duncan Miller of Hampstead. It dates from Lavery's first visit to Fingies, where he bought a house, and was painted aboard the *Kaiser-Hind* on the return journey in 1891. The freshness of the 9½ in by 6 in sketch perfectly illustrates the teaching of his mentor Basil-Lepage: "Always carry a sketch-book, select a person, watch him, then put down what you remember. Never look twice."

Lavery's painting has always inspired affection. It was given as a present by the artist in 1894, and in the 1930s it was acquired by a Dunfermline lady. When sold by her descendants last year, it caused a furore in a Scottish auction.

Hearing, rather than taste, is the subtext of a silhouette of a family group cut and dated 1831 by Augustin Edouart (1789-1861). This has Scottish connections, since it shows the Balmmain family of Perth making music and other noises.

Edouart has been described as "the most sympathetic and accurate silhouette cutter the world has ever seen". Although decorated as a soldier of Napoleon, he was evidently sympathetic to the legitimists, since while in Edinburgh he portrayed the exiled Charles X, his grandson the Duc de Bordeaux and 76 members of their family. The Balmmain silhouette is exhibited by Frank Sabin of Bond Street.

HUON MALLALIEU



Cornelis de Heem's still life, price £150,000, from Rafael Valls



Lavery's oil sketch *On Board a PBO* (Duncan Miller), £85,000



Boulogne Fishmarket (John Spink), £8,500

Fine furniture and reflections of the past

THE FIRST section of Fulham Road is sometimes disparagingly referred to as the "Brown Mile", because of the numerous antique shops that deal in "brown furniture". Huon Mallalieu writes.

British cabinet makers have seldom gone in for gilding and ornate mounting on the scale of French *ébénistes*, or for painted furniture in the manner of the Italians or Germans, but there is much more to them than just the colour.

A spectacular example of English gilding is on the stand of Ronald Phillips of Bruton Street — a fine and delicate pair of mid-18th-century carved mirrors in the high rococo manner of John Linnell. He took over the family cabinet-making business in Berkeley Square in 1763, and many of his designs are preserved in the V&A. Unfortunately Linnell, like Chippendale, did not mark his work, and similarity to a design does not prove that a piece is by the master.

Phillips also has some oddities. One is a brass-bound mahogany bucket, known as a "tea-comforter". The other is a square oak country-house post box standing 5ft high.

A tapestry — once a considerable

English industry — lends a touch of colour to the stand of Norman Adams of Hans Road, opposite Harrods, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Adams has a fine example of July from a set of the months, made for the second Duke of Bedford and measuring 9ft 4in by 8ft 4in.

Brown is an inadequate description of the rich toffee-golden patina of a William and Mary walnut side table, also at Norman Adams. It is a rarity in that the legs, stretchers and bun feet of such tables are often replaced or repaired because they suffered particularly from woodworm and damp. All are original here.

Among the truly brown of various shades, there is a good choice of George III break-front bookcases, imposing examples being offered by W.R. Harvey, of Witney, Oxfordshire. H.C. Baxter of Fulham Road, and Reindeer Antiques of Pottersbury, Northamptonshire. Baxter also has a satinwood window seat and two armchairs in the Sheraton style of about 1790.

The organisers maintain that the BADA fair is Europe's leading fair in antique clocks, and many of Britain's top dealers are there.



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STAND A9 at the Fair

A week for brave hearts north of the border

The story so far...

Not a very good week for your boys. You can say that again. But not a very good week for anybody except people with Arsenal players in their teams. And Rangers too. I suppose, although they're sliding through against Dundee was more or less inevitable. I don't know about that: things at Ibrox aren't as inevitable as they used to be. They are in third place in the Scottish league, and Hearts and Celtic don't show many signs of slipping.

True, but Negri scored on Saturday, which is a return to scoring form. For a while, I was thinking he might go down in the next player revaluation, and I'd be able to get him in for a late scoring surge.

That's right, because your main striker, John Hartson, is out of the cup now, isn't he?

Absolutely. He ran through more or less the entire Arsenal defence to get that goal to keep the Hammers in the match, then missed in the penalty shoot-out.

He wasn't the only one.

No, Samassi Abou missed as well.

Come on, you know what I'm getting at.

Okay, Berkovic missed too, both my West Ham players, in fact.

So your interest in the FA Cup is more or less at an end.

If by that you mean that I haven't got any Arsenal or Newcastle players, you're right. But the simple fact is that I haven't got so many transfers left that I can just go straight in and buy players from those clubs.

Would you want to, apart from their cup involvement?

Unfortunately, since there are only five premier league teams left to pick from in the FA Cup League, cup involvement is an important factor. But you're right in a way: both Arsenal and Newcastle are likely to be involved in very tight games from now until the end of the season, so their defenders might be good bets.

Forwards are your problem, though.

Exactly. Scotland might be a better place to look, as they still have three premier league teams in their cup semi-finals, or I could wait and see. Boasting, for instance, is out of the cup, but Coventry have a home game this weekend, so I don't plan to ditch him yet.

But West Ham aren't playing on Saturday, so you aren't going to replace Harry's men as a matter of course.

Good point: so Henrik Larsson or Negri could be on my list — but I think I really need Alan Shearer now. For a bit of that Mary Poppins magic?

Exactly.

Knowledge of the Scottish scene benefits an entrant from Bucks; could another player-manager be emerging down the Kings Road?



In a week with only one FA Carling Premiership fixture and two FA Cup replays, it seems remarkable that any ITF entrant could accumulate enough points to make a jump of 20.951 places — until, that is, you read the name and scrutinise the personnel of Alyson Spencer of High Wycombe. Every player is based north of the border, and one or two had highly successful weekends.

Barry Lavety of Hibernian scored the only goal of his team's win, while Marco Negri grabbed the first of Rangers' two against St Johnstone. However, Scottish-born Miss Spencer's best performer was Gilles Rousset, the Hearts goalkeeper, who kept a clean sheet as his team won at Dundee United.

There is, in fact, a distinctly Scottish influence on the jumpers' chart this week; two different teams of Brave Hearts, for example, and a number of other names suggesting Caledonian origins.

It will not have escaped anyone's notice that there are currently two Italian international player-managers in the FA Carling Premiership — but what price a third? Since Gianluca Vialli took over at Chelsea and Attilio Lombardo was promoted at Crystal Palace, there have been stirrings at the lower end of the ITF PFA.

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Gianfranco Zola of Chelsea in training: could he have his eye on the next big management job in the Premiership?

Denied any of his Chelsea teammates by the rules of the competition, Zola also sidestepped the tradition of picking his own club manager at the time, Ruud Geulit (a sign of things to come, perhaps?) in favour of Jim Smith, of Derby County. Zola has relied heavily on Benito Carbone, his joint top-scorer, and Steve Guppy, the Leicester City wing-back, with Charon Ferguson also contributing — as different a forward from Zola in style, temperament and appearance as one could imagine.

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5 B Fletcher	
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9 S Brooks	
10 A Adach	
11 E Smey	
12 M Portwood	
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14 C Purdy	
15 D Cheshire	
16 M Nicol	
17 J Woolmer	
18 S Allport	
19 T Saul	
20 P Johnson	

STUDENTS' LEAGUE

1 N Whitley	1008
2 M N Whitley	974
3 J Gardner	929
4 J Gardner	918
5 G Wilson	918
6 S Shiple	918
7 E Carmichael	918
8 M Shale	918
9 F Ferguson	918
10 W Razzak	918
11 J Whitley	918
12 C Maciejczak	918
13 G Skyring	918
14 D Hargreaves	918
15 J McGill	918
16 K Wade	918
17 T Shiple	918
18 M Shiple	918
19 T Shiple	918
20 D Griffin	918

YOUTH LEAGUE

1 M Somers	950
2 D Lewis	929
3 J Gardner	918
4 R Wickes	918
5 M Phillips	918
6 O Leighton	918
7 C Oyston	918
8 M Roberts	918
9 G Richards	918
10 J Laurance	918
11 C Maciejczak	918
12 K Tinsall	918
13 E Davies	918
14 N Skyring	918
15 N McGuinness	918
16 G Calderbank	918
17 S Mawer	918
18 T Quertley	918
19 T Smith	918
20 D Griffin	918

ITF LEAGUE

1 Mr M Jones	1008
2 A Luckhurst	1007
3 A Luckhurst	1007
4 G Long	1007
5 Mr M Jones	1007
6 A Luckhurst	1007
7 P Turner	1007
8 Mike Madden	1007
9 P Turner	1007
10 Mr P Turner	1007
11 Mary Ann Kennedy	1007
12 A Newstead	1007
13 D Shuter	1007
14 P Turner	1007
15 Mary Ann Kennedy	1007
16 Chris Ford	1007
17 A Luckhurst	1007
18 Mr D Burch	1007
19 G Dolan	1007
20 P Turner	1007
21 Mr M Jones	1007
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31 A Luckhurst	1007
32 M Whitley	1007
33 P Turner	1007
34 D Brown	1007
35 A Luckhurst	1007
36 J Heather	1007
37 C Burr	1007
38 G Doherty	1007
39 M Whitley	1007
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99 M Whitley	1007
100 M Whitley	1007

PFA PLAYERS' LEAGUE

1 Steve Poles	800
2 Simon Gimson	800
3 Paul Simpson	800
4 Jonathan Hunt	800
5 John Salvo	800
6 Alwyn Holland	800
7 Patrick Berger	800
8 Roy George	800
9 Robert Lee	800
10 David Batty	800
11 Michael Shaw	800
12 Taddy Shreeve	800
13 David Telford	800
14 Dean Stoddard	800
15 Nicky Ball	800
16 Phil Smith	800
17 Kevin Gallacher	800
18 Dave Watson	800
19 David Telford	800
20 John Kinnear	800
21 Kyle Lightbourne	800
22 Chris Powell	800
23 Andy Townsend	800
24 Paul Williams	800
25 David Brown	800
26 John Handley	800
27 Tim Brown	800
28 Roger Cross	800
29 Lee Dixon	800
30 Kevin Cunningham	800
31 Ian Pearce	800
32 John Barrow	800
33 Robin Van De Loo	800
34 Dean Holdsworth	800
35 David Beattie	800
36 Kenny Miller	800
37 Alex Stiles	800
38 Colin Hendry	800
39 Lars Bohinen	800
40 Nicky Salter	800
41 Richard Johnson	800
42 Steve Lomas	800
43 Frank Leaburn	800
44 James Le Sueur	800
45 Steve Clarke	800
46 Kevin Murray	800
47 Porcus Komaric	800
48 David Whalley	800
49 Gary McAllister	800
50 Darren Fletcher	800
51 Kevin Hitchcock	800
52 Danny Williamson	800
53 Neil Redden	800
54 Stewart Clelland	800
55 Ian Donnelly	800
56 Andy Smith	800
57 Gareth Southgate	800
58 John Scales	800
59 Jason Hall	800
60 Mark Wright	800
61 Spencer Prior	800
62 Andy Roberts	800
63 Robbie Fowler	800
64 Dennis Wise	800
65 Colin Calderhead	800
66 Alan Wright	800
67 John Harrison	800
68 Lee Sharpe	800
69 Lee Carter	800
70 Gianfranco Zola	800
71 Marco Swoboda	800
72 Steve Hodge	800
73 Alan Shearer	800
74 Alan Shearer	800
75 Mike Whitlow	800

FA CUP LEAGUE

1 Mr M Jones	289
2 Susan Mehn	289
3 Mr M Jones	289
4 Mr P Turner	289
5 Jon Pregon	289
6 Mr P Turner	289
7 Susan Mehn	289
8 H & S Management	289
9 G Dolan	289
10 Mr P Turner	289
11 P Tuley	289
12 Susan Mehn	289
13 K Perrell	289
14 J Hunt	289
15 Mrs A Stoddard	289
16 T Whitley	289
17 Mr P Turner	289
18 Mrs A Stoddard	289
19 Mrs A Stoddard	289
20 Alastair Kennedy	289

TICKET OFFER - THE TIMES

Exclusive World Cup ticket offer

Today The Times offers readers the chance to see England's first game in the World Cup, against Tunisia, on June 15. Prices are per person flying on a private charter and returning the same day.

England v Tunisia From £434

- Return flight to Marseille from Gatwick
- Category 3 match ticket
- Transfers in France
- Airport tax
- Accompanied by bilingual staff

Flight and transfers for £354 (official ticket holders only).

BAC Sport

ABTA 75810 - Offer subject to availability ATOL4016

CHANGING TIMES

Who has the best football coverage on the internet?

Only one. The Times Interactive Team Football. It's particularly useful because it's the only one that gives you the names of all the players in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the managers in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the referees in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the commentators in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the pundits in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the fans in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the players in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the managers in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the referees in all the teams. And it's the only one that gives you the names of all the commentators in all the teams. 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Down to ten men for the cup semi-finals

Only five English and Scottish premier league clubs left in the cup... could the dummy solution work?

The departure of Coventry City from the FA Cup at Bramall Lane last Tuesday means that entrants in the 17th FA Cup are faced with a tricky problem. With Falkirk, Sheffield United and Wolverhampton Wanderers reaching the cup semi-finals in England and Scotland, only five premier league teams remain in the two knockout competitions, meaning that only ten players, or nine players and a manager, are able to accrue 172 points from the semi-final games.

Of course, all players still gain points based on their league performances, but competitors aiming at the FA Cup league may need to make some tactical adjustments. First, what is to be done about the two "dead" places in the team? If your remaining transfers will stretch to it, it might be wise to transfer two cheap non-playing members into your squad, in order to use as much of your transfer budget as possible on players who will be able to accrue points.

Which positions should you put these "dummies" into? A manager might seem to be the first logical sacrifice, as he can only gain a maximum of three points, whereas outfield players could all, in various circumstances, do better. However, defenders are always liable to lose points through



such natural shocks as yellow and red cards, penalties conceded and own goals. No manager has yet approached the -15 of Barnsley's Adrian Moses. If you pick a manager, then the one you deem most likely to see his team draw the semi-final (before winning the

replay) might be best: that way you will gain four points rather than three.

Of the five teams left, which is most likely to score goals? Not Celtic or Rangers, surely, who play each other. A close game seems on the cards here, which might point towards Jonathan Gould, the Celtic goalkeeper, as a strong choice between the posts, especially after his performance against Aberdeen at Pittodrie on Saturday, when he defied the home attack on a number of occasions.

Heart of Midlothian, second in the Scottish League, who face Falkirk, placed second in the first division, might be candidates to score a few goals - except that Falkirk have more recent experience at this stage, having reached last season's Telford Scottish Cup final, where they were beaten by St Johnstone. Nevertheless, Neil McCann, the Scottish international winger, is in good form, and will be a certainty for a midfield place in most serious entrants' selections.

Overmars has already scored 16 FA Cup points, will be without the suspended Dennis Bergkamp against Wolves at Villa Park, which leaves Alan Shearer as the best bet for goals against Sheffield United at Old Trafford.

NICK SZCZEPANIK

David Weir of Hearts, the second highest points scorer in the FA Cup league



NICK SZCZEPANIK

David Weir of Hearts, the second highest points scorer in the FA Cup league

THIS WEEK'S MOVES

IN		
21405	John O'Kane	Everton £1.50m
41006	Neil Embilen	Crystal Palace £1.0m
OUT		
11401	Neville Southall	Everton £2.0m
40605	Jamie Pollock	Bolton Wanderers £2.0m

HOW TO MAKE A TRANSFER

YOU MAY transfer as and when you wish according to your team transfer allowance. If a player or manager moves teams during the season, it may affect the composition of your team. You may adjust your team by using the transfer system to avoid missing out on points.

TEAMS registered from now on will be allocated 20 transfers for the rest of the season.

THE LINE is open now and will remain open for the rest of the season. You may only make transfers by using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone). You will need ten digits for your PIN which you will have to tap in (not speak). Follow the simple instructions and tap in the five-digit codes of the players that you are transferring.

YOU MAY make up to four transfers per call but may make as many calls as you wish to achieve the required amount of transfers.

TRANSFERS made before 12 noon on any day will become effective for matches starting after that time. Transfers made after 12 noon will become effective for matches starting after 12 noon the following day.

YOUR NEW player only starts to score points for you when his transfer is registered. The current score of the player transferred out remains part of your team score but he then ceases to score for you.

CALLS COST 50p per minute and calls from a telephone box cost approximately twice as much.

Transfer number: 0891 884 628.
Outside the UK: +44 990 200 538.

Code	Name	Team	£	FA(w)	FA	LG(w)	Tot
10101	J Leighton	Aberdeen	1.50	0	2	2	30
10201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	0	13	0	70
10301	M Bouniech	Aston Villa	3.00	0	18	0	77
10401	D Watson	Barnsley	1.00	0	11	0	-13
10501	T Flowers	Blackburn	4.00	0	9	0	57
10601	K Brannagan	Bolton	1.50	0	0	0	37
10701	S Kerr	Celtic	4.00	0	0	0	0
10702	J Gould	Celtic	4.00	0	9	7	95
10801	E De Goey	Chelsea	3.00	0	-3	0	96
10901	S Ogrizovic	Coventry City	1.50	2	4	2	28
11001	C Nash	C Palace	0.25	0	0	0	0
11002	K Miller	C Palace	2.00	0	23	8	38
11101	M Poon	Derby County	2.50	0	8	0	72
11201	S Dykstra	Dundee Utd	2.00	0	6	2	-35
11301	J Westwater	Dunfermline	1.00	0	-2	-1	-11
11401	N Southall	Everton	2.00	0	0	0	3
11402	T Myhrne	Everton	2.00	0	0	0	11
11601	G Rouselet	Hearts	3.50	0	11	8	67
11601	C Reid	Hibernian	1.50	0	0	0	-1
11602	O Gottschalk	Hibernian	1.50	0	0	0	-8
11702	G Marshall	Kilmarnock	1.50	0	-1	-1	-11
11801	N Marshall	Leeds Utd	3.50	0	13	0	115
11901	K Keller	Leicester City	3.00	0	3	0	67
12001	D James	Liverpool	4.00	0	-5	0	77
12101	P Schmelchal	Man Utd	5.00	0	-1	0	131
12201	S Howie	Motherwell	1.00	0	0	0	0
12301	S Given	Newcastle	3.00	0	11	0	46
12401	A Goram	Rangers	5.00	3	18	8	62
12501	K Pressman	Sheffield Wed	2.00	0	5	0	14
12702	P Jones	Southampton	2.00	0	0	0	37
12601	A Main	St Johnstone	0.50	0	6	0	59
12801	I Walker	Tottenham	2.50	0	-3	0	22
12901	L Mikosko	West Ham	2.00	0	0	0	4
13001	N Sullivan	Wimbledon	2.50	0	15	0	87

Code	Name	Team	£	FA(w)	FA	LG(w)	Tot
20201	L Dixon	Arsenal	3.00	1	8	1	56
20202	N Winterburn	Arsenal	3.00	0	10	0	37
20301	E Pettit	Arsenal	3.00	1	7	1	43
20302	S Staunton	Aston Villa	2.50	0	9	0	26
20303	A Wright	Aston Villa	2.50	0	9	0	32
20304	S Grayson	Aston Villa	2.50	0	16	0	38
20304	F Nelson	Aston Villa	2.00	0	-1	0	0
20401	N Eaden	Barnsley	0.50	0	4	0	2
20402	N Thompson	Barnsley	0.50	0	0	0	-5
20403	D Barnard	Barnsley	1.00	0	11	0	13
20502	J Kane	Blackburn	3.00	0	4	0	38
20503	P Valery	Blackburn	2.50	0	1	0	9
20601	N Cox	Bolton	2.00	0	1	0	0
20601	M Whitlow	Bolton	1.50	0	-2	0	5
20602	R Elliott	Bolton	2.00	0	0	0	-6
20603	J Phillips	Bolton	1.00	0	0	0	71
20701	T Boyd	Celtic	3.50	0	0	0	2
20702	T McKinnay	Celtic	3.50	0	6	4	72
20703	J McNamee	Celtic	4.00	0	-1	0	26
20801	G Le Seux	Chelsea	4.00	0	-4	0	45
20801	D Falcous	Chelsea	4.00	0	0	0	20
20802	C Babayaro	Chelsea	2.00	0	0	0	14
20803	F Sinclair	Chelsea	2.00	0	0	0	14
20901	D Burrows	Coventry City	1.00	-1	8	-1	32
20903	M Hall	Coventry City	1.00	0	6	0	27
20904	R Nilsson	Coventry City	1.00	-1	8	-1	16
21001	D Gordon	C Palace	1.50	0	10	1	16
21002	M Edworthy	C Palace	1.50	0	13	1	0
21004	J Smith	C Palace	1.50	0	13	1	37
21101	C Powell	Derby County	2.00	0	8	0	14
21102	D Yates	Derby County	1.00	0	4	0	28
21103	G Rowlett	Derby County	1.50	0	0	0	-1
21403	T Phelan	Everton	1.50	0	0	0	4
21404	M Ward	Everton	1.50	0	6	0	20
21501	G Locke	Hearts	1.50	0	5	5	23
21701	D Kerr	Kilmarnock	1.00	0	9	0	41
21801	G Kelly	Leeds Utd	2.50	0	9	0	31
21802	D Robertson	Leeds Utd	2.50	0	3	0	19
21902	S Guppy	Leicester City	3.00	0	0	0	51
22001	S Bjornby	Liverpool	3.00	0	-2	0	26
22002	J McAtee	Liverpool	3.00	0	0	0	4
22003	R Jones	Liverpool	3.00	0	-2	0	30
22101	D Irwin	Man Utd	4.00	0	-2	0	60
22102	G Neville	Man Utd	3.50	0	-1	0	56
22103	P Neville	Man Utd	3.50	0	-1	0	56
22301	S Watson	Newcastle	3.00	0	6	0	30
22302	W Barton	Newcastle	2.00	0	6	-2	18
22304	S Pearce	Newcastle	3.00	0	11	0	42
22401	A Cleland	Rangers	3.00	0	9	1	27
22402	S Hinchcliffe	Rangers	3.00	0	1	0	27
21401	A Hinchcliffe	Sheffield Wed	2.50	0	0	0	13
21402	E Barrett	Sheffield Wed	1.50	0	0	0	-3
22502	J Nolan	Sheffield Wed	2.00	0	-3	0	28
22701	J Dodd	Southampton	1.50	0	-1	0	28
22702	F Benali	Southampton	0.75	0	-2	0	15
22801	J Beresford	Southampton	2.00	0	4	0	10
22801	C Wilson	Tottenham	2.00	0	0	0	-8
22802	J Edinborough	Tottenham	2.00	0	0	0	6
22803	S Carr	Tottenham	2.00	0	-1	0	0
22901	J Dicks	West Ham	3.00	0	0	0	16
22902	A Impey	West Ham	1.50	0	0	0	8
22903	T Breacker	West Ham	2.00	0	-1	0	17
23001	B Thatcher	Wimbledon	2.00	0	-9	0	28
23002	K Cunningham	Wimbledon	2.00	0	9	0	15
23003	A Kimble	Wimbledon	2.00	0	9	0	15

Code	Name	Team	£	FA(w)	FA	LG(w)	Tot
30101	B O'Neill	Aberdeen	2.00	0	-1	-1	1
30201	T Adams	Arsenal	3.00	1	3	1	42
30202	M Keown	Arsenal	3.00	1	6	1	27
30203	G Grimandi	Arsenal	2.00	0	10	0	39
30204	S Bourd	Arsenal	3.00	0	7	0	27
30301	G Southgate	Aston Villa	3.00	0	4	0	25
30302	U Ehiogu	Aston Villa	3.00	0	7	0	35
30401	A De Zeeuw	Barnsley	1.00	0	4	0	-14
30402	A Moses	Barnsley	0.50	0	2	0	-15
30403	M Appleby	Barnsley	0.50	0	1	0	-9
30502	C Hendry	Blackburn	3.00	0	4	0	36
30504	S Hanchoz	Blackburn	3.00	0	3	0	29
30505	T Pedersen	Blackburn	2.00	0	0	0	2
30601	G Taggart	Bolton	1.50	0	0	0	5
30602	G Bergeson	Bolton	1.00	0	0	0	17
30603	C Fairclough	Bolton	1.00	0	0	0	-11
30604	M Fish	Bolton	1.50	0	0	0	10
30701	E Anson	Celtic	1.50	0	1	0	25
30702	M MacKay	Celtic	3.00	0	0	0	3
30703	A Stubbs	Celtic	3.00	0	5	0	54
30704	M Ripper	Celtic	3.00	0	6	0	59
30801	F Leboeuf	Chelsea	3.00	0	-5	0	33
30802	M Duberry	Chelsea	3.00	0	-4	0	18
30803	S Clarke	Chelsea	2.50	0	-4	0	12
30804	B Lambourde	Chelsea	2.50	0	0	0	-3
30901	L Daleh	Coventry City	1.50	0	0	0	25
30902	P Shaw	Coventry City	2.50	0	0	0	31
30903	P Williams	Coventry City	1.50	0	0	0	-11
31002	A Lunnigan	C Palace	0.75	0	10	0	19
31003	D Tuttle	C Palace	0.75	0	0	0	-2
31004	H Hendersson	C Palace	1.00	0	13	0	1
31101	I Simec	Derby County	2.50	0	4	0	29
31102	J Laurens	Derby County	1.50	0	-1	0	19
31201	S Pressley	Dunfermline	2.00	0	3	0	19
31301	G Shields	Dunfermline	1.50	0	-1	-2	-14
31401	S Bilic	Everton	1.50	0	0	0	-13
31402	D Watson	Everton	1.50	0	0	0	20
31403	C Tiller	Everton	1.50	0	0	0	20
31501	D Weir	Hearts	3.00	0	15	5	44
31601	J Hughes	Hibernian	2.00	0	0	0	-11
31801	D Wetherall	Leeds Utd	2.50	0	10	0	50
31802	G Halls	Leeds Utd	2.00	0	5	0	37
31803	R Molenaar	Leeds Utd	2.00	0	14	0	38
31804	L Radebe	Leeds Utd	2.00	0	9	0	36
31901	M Elliott	Leicester City	3.50	0	3	0	59
31902	P Karmali	Leicester City	2.00	0	0	0	52
31903	S Walsh	Leicester City	2.00	0	-2	0	31
31904	S Pryor	Leicester City	2.00	0	5	0	20
32001	M Wright	Liverpool	3.00	0	0	0	5
32002	D Matteo	Liverpool	3.00	0	-2	0	34
32003	B Kyriane	Liverpool	3.00	0	-1	0	29
32004	P Babbs	Liverpool	3.00	0	0	0	-3
32005	H Berg	Man Utd	3.50	0	1	0	44
32101	D May	Man Utd	3.50	0	-3	0	-6
32102	G Pallister	Man Utd	3.50	0	-4	0	51
32201	P Albert	Newcastle	1.50	0	1	0	18
32202	D Peacock	Newcastle	3.00	0	4	1	11
32303	S Hovey	Newcastle	2.00	0	6	-2	18
32304	A Pistorne	Newcastle	3.00	0	6	-1	26
32401	P Worral	Rangers	3.50	0	-1	0	33
32402	J Bjorklund	Rangers	3.50	0	7	1	43
32403	L Amoroso	Rangers	3.50	0	0	0	0
32404	R Gough	Rangers	4.00	1	7	1	15
32501	D Walker	Sheffield Wed	2.00	0	3	0	14
32502	J Newsonne	Sheffield Wed	2.00	0	3	0	14
32503	P Atherton	Sheffield Wed	2.00	0	3	0	21
32701	R Dryden	Southampton	1.00	0	0	0	12
32702	S Lundekvam	Southampton	1.50	0	0	0	12
32704	K Monkou	Southampton	1.50	-1	0	0	9
32801	S McCuskey	St Johnstone	0.50	0	0	-1	9
32801	S Campbell	Tottenham	2.00	0	5	0	18
32802	J Scahill	Tottenham	1.50	0	0	0	1
32803	R Vega	Tottenham	1.50	-2	0	0	9
32804	C Calderwood	Tottenham	1.50	0	4	0	21
32901	R Ferdinand	West Ham	2.50	0	1	0	17
32902	R Hall	West Ham	2.00	0	2	0	24
31403	D Unsworth	West Ham	1.50	0	0	0	10
32903	S Potts	West Ham	2.00	0	0	0	10
32904	P Pearce	West Ham	2.00	0	5	0	19
31001	A Roberts	Wimbledon	1.50	0	13	0	23
33001	C Perry	Wimbledon	2.50	0	8	0	29
33002	D Blackwell	Wimbledon	2.50	0	3	0	29

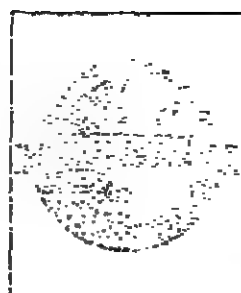
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY MARCH 24 1998

Investors angry at Fifield payoff at EMI

By CHRIS AYRES

EMI is facing a clash with its institutional shareholders over the scale of the payoff to Jim Fifield, head of the company's music division.

Mr Fifield is in talks over a payoff which could reach £12 million, even though it emerged yesterday that he has yet to resign from the group. His current contract only lasts until March 1999, though if he is dismissed he is technically entitled to three years' worth of salary and benefits — a total approaching £21 million.

EMI surprised the City in February when it indicated that Mr Fifield would not — as widely expected — become group chief executive.

Instead, EMI stated that Sir Colin Southgate, who recently became chairman of the Royal Opera House, would remain executive chairman. At the time EMI decided that Mr Fifield was to leave the company.

Details of Mr Fifield's payoff — which is expected to be the highest ever for a director of a UK listed company — emerged over the weekend, provoking anger from leading institutional investors who believe he should be paid only one year's salary. Last year, Mr Fifield earned a total of £6.9 million, of which £2.1 million was his basic salary.

Senior sources at EMI yesterday reacted with anger, arguing that institutional shareholders had voted on Mr Fifield's contract.

A leading institutional investor said yesterday it would be looking to the non-executive directors to stand firm. They include Eric Nicoli, of United Biscuits; Hugh Jenkins, former chairman and chief executive of Prudential Portfolio Managers; Sir Peter Walters, chairman of SmithKline Beecham; and Sir Graham Day, former chairman of Cadbury Schweppes.

It is understood that the day-to-day running of the group will be split between Ken Berry, head of record labels, and Martin Bandler, head of the publishing business.

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Southgate: still chairman



Bob Mackenzie, chief executive of NPC, left, and Stephen Holmes, vice-chairman of Cendant, after the £801m deal was agreed yesterday

Car park kings sell out in £801m American deal

By CARL MORTIMER, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THE TWO ageing entrepreneurs who founded Britain's largest chain of car parks have agreed to sell National Parking Corporation to Cendant, an American business services group, for £801 million.

Sir Donald Gosling, 69, and Ronald Hobson, 76, the joint chairmen of NPC, will together collect more than £380 million for their majority interest in the company, which owns 500 NPC car parks and Green Flag, the breakdown and rescue service provider.

Cendant's offer, which is priced at 67p a share, a 17 per cent premium to Friday's closing price, will accelerate the US company's rapid growth in auto-related services.

Cendant owns FHH Vehicle Management Services, which

provides fuel credit cards and fleet management services, managing some 275,000 company cars in the UK. Cendant's vice-chairman, Stephen Holmes, said that the NPC brand would be taken into Europe and the United States where car parking was still a fragmented business.

He said: "We think the NPC brand has scope outside the UK in Germany, France Italy and Spain."

However, Mr Holmes said the core situation was in selling more services to the 3.5 million Green Flag members and some 66 million customer contacts at NPC car parks. He said: "Those are compelling numbers."

Cendant, which has a market value of some \$30 billion, was formed last December by

the merger of CUC, which provides membership services to shoppers, and HFS, which owned the Avis car rental business. Cendant's main business is in franchising brands such as Avis, Howard Johnson, Ramada and Travelodge, providing the systems as well as reservations service for the

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hotel and car rental operators. As Cendant sealed the NPC deal, the US company was yesterday agreeing a \$3.1 billion (£1.8 billion) takeover in the US, where it has been in a bid battle with AIG to take over AIG, an insurance group. NPC's deal with Cendant is a

big improvement on the price mooted three years ago when a leveraged buyout consortium, led by Prudential Ventures, offered between £500 million and £600 million for the car parks group. The deal fell apart over disagreement on price and a new management team was brought in, led by Bob Mackenzie, who will be joining Cendant.

NPC's properties are likely to be spun off by the new owner in development partnerships with property companies. The car parking giant has net asset backing of £275 million but the US company is more interested in developing NPC's income stream rather than exploiting gains in asset value. Cendant recently sold the property assets of a real estate brokerage, having off

the properties in a separate company. NPC's property portfolio is likely to be scrutinised with keen interest by developers because of its prime holdings in city centres.

Cendant said that it would cross-sell its All Star Fuel Card at NPC car parks and would develop car maintenance operations within NPC car parks. Mr Holmes said that the company was not concerned by the UK Government's campaign against the car. "On the contrary, we love it," he said. "The American company sees opportunities in selling more services to motorists. In December, it acquired Provident, a direct marketer of automobile insurance, raising the possibility that NPC could be used as an outlet for car insurance."

Germans to buy Random House for \$1.1bn

FROM OLIVER AUGUST
IN NEW YORK

BERTELSMANN, the German media group, is to buy America's Random House for an estimated \$1.1 billion (about £655 million).

Bertelsmann, which will become the world's largest general publisher of books in the English language, has reached agreement with Advance Publications, owner of Random House. Last year Random House had revenues of \$370 million.

Bertelsmann, the world's third largest media group, bought Bantam Doubleday Dell, another US publisher, last year. It is expected that one third of Bertelsmann's annual revenues will come from America, equal in size to the group's German revenues.

Mark Wessner, Bertelsmann's chief executive, said: "It is a strategic priority to strengthen the key business of books and develop a leading position in the Anglo-American book market."

Bertelsmann's authors include Martin Amis, John Updike, Norman Mailer, John Grisham and Michael Crichton.

Advance, publishers of *GO*, *The New Yorker* and *Vanity Fair*, is to focus on newspapers and magazines.

The German group is also a leading player in the film and music sectors. It owns other European media companies, including Pearson, whose Penguin unit sells fewer English language books than Bertelsmann. With the Random House acquisition, Bertelsmann is shifting its focus to the US.

Bertelsmann is next in line behind US media giants Time Warner and Walt Disney.

After the completion of the deal, which is subject to regulatory approval, Peter Olson, who at present runs Bertelsmann Books in the US, will become chairman and chief executive of the new combined company, Random House.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET
FTSE 100 5872.0 (-0.3)
Yield 2.75%
FTSE All share 2785.72 (-2.30)
Nikkei 10664.63 (+38.36)
New York
Dow Jones 8853.82 (-52.81)
S&P Composite 1098.66 (-0.50)

US RATE
Federal Funds 5.25% (P=4%)
Long Bond 100.14% (103%)
Yield 5.29% (5.86%)

LONDON MONEY
3-mth Interbank 7.75% (7.75%)
Life long call
future (Jun) 108.75 (108.75)

STERLING

New York
£/\$ 1.6790* (1.6885)
London
\$/£ 1.5787 (1.5643)
DM 3.0654 (3.0521)
FF 10.2740 (10.2280)
SF 2.5018 (2.4947)
Yen 218.49 (217.05)
£ Index 107.9 (107.4)

\$\$\$ \$\$\$\$

London
DM 1.8288* (1.8318)
FF 4.1228* (4.1350)
SF 1.4888 (1.4883)
Yen 130.28* (130.37)
£ Index 108.7 (108.6)

Tokyo close Yen 138.87

Brent 15-day (Jun) \$18.30 (\$18.60)

London close \$283.38 (\$291.85)

* denotes midday trading price

Edmonds to replace Cruickshank

DON CRUICKSHANK's replacement as Director-General of Telecommunications is to be David Edmonds, 54, a former civil servant who spent six months co-ordinating NatWest Group's preparations for EMU (Raymond Snoddy writes).

Mr Edmonds, who is married with four children, joined the NatWest group in 1991 and became managing director of group central services in 1995 where he supervised the devolution of much of his job to the group's individual divisions.

He left NatWest at the end of last year on amicable terms.

Takeover fever sends Savoy shares soaring

By DOMINIC WALESH

THE takeover frenzy surrounding the Savoy Group drove the A shares 137.5p higher to £18.87.5p yesterday, taking the total gain in the last two days of trading to more than 25 per cent.

Potential bidders, led by US predators Starwood Lodging, Meditrust and Blackstone Group, are expected to pore over the group's annual results, due out today, before deciding where to pitch formal offers.

A fourth US investment group, Patriot American Hospitality, is thought to be keeping its powder dry, pending Thursday's results.

Like Meditrust, Patriot is believed to be contemplating a concurrent bid for the Grosve-

nor House Hotel, but is said to be talking at the asking price.

Even at the top end of analysts' profit forecasts, the likely £500 million-plus price tag for the Savoy looks expensive, while the poor state of repair of the Grosvenor House means any purchaser would have to spend up to £100 million for refurbishment on top of the estimated £350 million purchase price.

Any deal would be a coup for Granada, which inherited the Grosvenor House and a 68 per cent stake in Savoy as part of the Forte takeover two years ago.

The complication is that the Savoy's two-tier share structure means its 68 per cent

stake does not give it outright control, equating to just 42 per cent of the votes.

However, sources close to Granada claimed last week that the Wontner family, which has effectively controlled the Savoy Group through a number of trusts, no longer speaks for more than 50 per cent of votes.

As a result, Gerry Robinson, the chairman of Granada, is pressing for a more equitable share-out of any sale price between A and B shareholders.

However, the Wontner trustees, who are believed to be looking for at least £75 per B share, are thought to be confident they can still muster the necessary support.

Exporters taking a pounding

THE pressure on British exporters intensified yesterday as sterling jumped to its highest level for seven-and-a-half months against the mark in response to a weekend deal to shore up oil prices (Janet Bush writes).

The pound hit a high of DM3.0679 in afternoon trading, it closed at 107.9 on its effective index against a basket of world currencies, its highest since February 1989.

Sterling was bolstered by a rise in the oil price and also reacted positively to a statement by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, that Britain would not re-enter the exchange-rate mechanism ahead of membership of the single currency.

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Owen to receive £1.5m package from NatWest

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

MARTIN OWEN, who resigned as chief executive of NatWest Markets after the discovery of a £77 million black hole last year, is to receive more than £1.5 million in bonus and pension payments.

NatWest's annual report reveals that the bank boosted Mr Owen's pension by £762,000 last year so that the 52-year-old former executive might receive a yearly pension of £142,000 with immediate effect.

Mr Owen will also be awarded £738,000 in April when he becomes entitled to three years' bonuses under an incentive plan that was established for a handful of key executives at NatWest

Markets. This plan includes a bonus of £350,000 for 1997, even though the investment banking division reported losses of £706 million for the year.

He has already received a year's salary of £300,000 following his resignation in June last year, of which he has taken £35,000 in cash and the remainder as an additional pension contribution. There was also a £12,000 outplacement fee.

In addition, Mr Owen stands to gain further bonuses under a NatWest group incentive plan.

However, the bank declined to say when or how much he will receive under this scheme, which is linked to the perfor-

mance of the group over several years.

Mr Owen, the architect of NatWest's unsuccessful strategy to become a global investment bank, famously waived £200,000 of his annual bonus in 1996 for his part in a compliance breakdown which led to a £77 million loss in the interest-rate options department of NatWest Markets.

The Securities and Futures Authority, the City regulator, is continuing to investigate the conduct of individuals involved in the compliance failure.

NatWest has since sold its UK equities business to Bankers Trust, and the derivatives business to Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, for £179 million.

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Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

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Radio Authority to launch digital era

Europarks, a rival operator. Gordon Layton, chief executive of NPC, was acquitted of conspiring to defraud Europarks, but the affair left an unpleasant taste.

Sir Donald was knighted in Harold Wilson's controversial 1976 resignation honours list — Mr Hobson is said to have declined — and is known for giving millions to charity. Charity, at NPC, begins at home. The pair shared a £132 million special dividend in 1995.

Oil prices surge after Opec's cut in exports

The Russian Government is close to launching its auction of Rosneft, the Siberian oil company. Reports suggest that Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the Government's advisers, value the business at between \$2.3 billion (£1.4 billion) and \$2.4 billion with a starting price of \$2.1 billion.

Fergus Macleod of NatWest Markets said the agreement would be helpful in dealing with more oil from Iraq and could lead to prices moving back

That possibility was raised by Iran which signalled its cut would come from an official quota it cannot meet, rather than its actual production.

Tomkins buys private US company for £112m

ing profits of £14 million on sales of £105.3 million last year. At December 31, it had net assets of \$70.5 million. Tomkins is also assuming Schrader-Bridgeport's debt of \$68.5 million.

Tomkins, whose executive

Tomkins expects Schrader-Bridgeport to benefit from Gates's worldwide infrastructure. Integrating the business is likely to lead to job losses among Schrader-Bridgeport's 1,500 employees.

The prosecution was led by the Serious Fraud Office, working with the Sussex fraud squad. Feld is serving his sentence in Coldinghy prison in Surrey.

nounced plans to eliminate 8,200 jobs by the year 2000. Most of the cutbacks will be at McDonnell Douglas. The cuts are designed to save about \$1 billion annually.

TARMAC, the UK construction and quarries group, has secured work from Marks & Spencer worth more than £69 million to enlarge or refurbish stores in Glasgow, Nottingham, Chester, Derby, Milton Keynes and Hamforth, Cheshire. In France it will be working on a new M&S store in Marseille. In Glasgow work starts shortly on a large expansion of the main M&S city centre store in Argyle Street. Work in Chester and Derby concerns two former Littlewoods stores.

MAYBORN GROUP, the consumer goods company whose branded products include Tommee Tippee and Dylan, is holding the total dividend at 8p a share, with an unchanged 5.4p final, after suffering a fall in pre-tax profits to £4.46 (£6.5 million). Earnings fell to 14.2p a share from 19.8p. Turnover rose to £56.2 million from £53.8 million, helped by a £1.9 million contribution from acquisitions. But difficult trading in baby products caused a 53 per cent fall in the division's profits.

Bill O'Connor, who succeeded Mr Snowden as chairman and chief executive officer of GTEch, will mount a robust defence of the company, which plays a key role in the running of the UK National Lottery. John Stoker, the acting regula-

The GTEch delegation will include Lord Moore of Lower Marsh, who replaced Mr Snowden as GTEch's representative on the board of Camelot, the consortium which runs the National Lottery. The four other GTEch directors are American. GTEch has submitted a dossier rebutting allegations made about the company and its business practices.


A High Court jury held that

Mr. Snowden, had tried to bribe Mr. Branson to pull out of the bidding for the National Lottery licence. Snowden claimed the scalp of Peter Davis, the lottery negotiator, whose earlier setting of GTeach was called into question in the light of the matter.

Mr. Stoker is expected to make a brief statement at today's meeting. A decision on whether to allow GTeach to continue is likely to fall some weeks. It is feared that replacing GTeach could prove highly disruptive to the National Lottery.

Country	1999	2000
Albania S	4,001	3,658
Algeria	25,558	25,558
Belarus F	26,923	26,923
Canada S	2,658	2,658
Czech Rep	1,325	1,325
Denmark	1,325	1,325
France	1,325	1,325
Germany	1,325	1,325
Germany-Dem	1,325	1,325
Greece	1,325	1,325
Italy	1,325	1,325
Japan	1,325	1,325
Latvia	1,325	1,325
Lithuania	1,325	1,325
Malaysia	1,325	1,325
Malta	1,325	1,325
Poland	1,325	1,325
Portugal	1,325	1,325
Romania	1,325	1,325
Slovakia	1,325	1,325
Slovenia	1,325	1,325
Spain	1,325	1,325
Sweden	1,325	1,325
Switzerland	1,325	1,325
Turkey	1,325	1,325
U.S.A.	1,325	1,325

Notes: For freight, destination blank. For other countries, origin blank. Only statistics by Germany. Figures may apply to transship countries. Notes



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Output agreement fuels resurgence in oil sector

FOUR out of the six best performing shares among the FTSE 100 yesterday were oil companies. They bubbled to the surface after the weekend agreement reached jointly by Opec members and non-members to cut output by between 1.6 million and two million barrels of oil a day.

The subsequent rise in the price of Brent crude for May delivery back above \$15.50 a barrel was marginal, but there was an almost audible sense of relief from the oil companies which were able to shrug off recent nervousness.

BP, which is sensitive to the oil price, led the way with a leap of 60p, or 7.67 per cent, to 933p as a total of 20 million shares changed hands. It was followed in hot pursuit by Esso, up 19p to 573p, Shell, 18p to 453p, and British Petroleum, 23p to 368p.

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There are still problems of oversupply and a lot of uncertainty over the Far East and the outcome there, he says. Jurgen Lunshof at rival Credit Lyonnais Laing says the deal may boost the oil companies.

Share prices generally surged back above the 6,000 level in early trading, cheered by the agreement on oil and Wall Street's performance last week. Share prices were unable to maintain the early pace and soon began to lose ground, weighed down by an opening fall for the Dow Jones industrial average.

The FTSE 100 index, up 67 points at one stage, closed 9.3 down at 5,947.0, not helped by a long list of companies going ex dividend - equivalent to a 68-point deficit. These included Legal & General, down 3p at 723p, Reckitt & Colman, 22p at 111.20, Prudential, up 30p at 936p, Reed International, down 14p at 590p, and United News & Media, 12p at 805p.



Stock Market Writer of the Year



Despite some caution over the agreement on output signed by Opec members and non-members, the sector surged

British Aerospace continued to go from strength to strength, adding 26p at a new peak of £19.63 on revived talk of a bid soon from GEC, down 15p at 448p.

It was the first day of trading for Compass as a constituent of the FTSE 100 by Compass, advanced 13p to 509p. Dixons gave a run-down to a number of brokers about current trading condi-



IT WAS a day of mixed fortunes for the food retailers after a positive few weeks that has seen the sector scale new heights. Asda shed 8p at 200p, with J Sainsbury 7p off at 490p and Tesco 20p lower at 550p.

Reports at the weekend claimed that the superstores were finding it difficult to obtain new sites where they could successfully obtain planning permission and clash with existing sites.

Such a situation offers scope for their smaller rivals to muscle in and exploit the

tions last week. Glywed International was a strong market, climbing 12p to 261p ahead of results out this morning. Pre-tax profits are expected to come in static at around £86 million, but it is hoped they will also contain some bullish news.

British Land came under selling pressure with the price dropping 15p to 770p after Henderson Crosthwaite recommended the shares as a "sell" to clients.

Savoy Hotel attracted further speculative buying with the "A" shares surging 157p to £18.87p. Last week the group announced it had received a number of bid approaches.

London Clubs International continued to lose ground in the wake of last week's proposals in the Budget to raise the tax on gaming. The shares finished 9p lower at 212p. Capital Corporation was also 3p off at 107p.

Jim Slater, the doyen of share tipsters, has published a clutch of new recommendations for his followers. They included SFT Group, up 18p at 217p, PizzaExpress, 10p better at 815p, and Vardens, 13p better at 139p.

Property Partnerships climbed 3p to 305p after confirming it had received a bid approach.

A share placing aimed at raising almost £6 million left the AIM-listed Memory Corporation 4p lower at 26p.

GILT-EDGED: Bond prices were unsettled in early trading by news of the oil price deal and the sacking of the Russian Cabinet. But selling pressure was easily contained and the absence of any fresh features discouraged investors. However, traders maintain that the undertone remains strong.

In the futures pit the June series of the long gilt retreated 5p to £108.14 in thin trading that saw just 34,000 contracts completed. The five-year future was neglected, finishing two ticks lower at £102.49 on turnover of 651 contracts.

In long, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 fell seven ticks to £127, while at the shorter end Treasury 7 per cent 2002 ended a tick easier at £102.12.

NEW YORK: Shares were expected to open weaker but rebounded quickly in morning trading. However, by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 52.81 points to 8,853.62.

New York (midday)

Dow Jones 8,853.62 (-52.81)
S&P Composite 3,098.66 (-0.59)

Tokyo 10,618.03 (+38.30)
Nikkei Average 3,381.03 (+1.93)

Hong Kong 11,994.33 (+20.10)
Hang Seng 11,994.33 (+20.10)

Amsterdam 1,122.00 (+1.00)
AEX Index 1,122.00 (+1.00)

Sydney 2,779.33 (+4.31)
ASX 2,779.33 (+4.31)

Frankfurt 4,971.32 (+30.28)
DAX 4,971.32 (+30.28)

Singapore 1,660.44 (+18.67)
SSE 1,660.44 (+18.67)

Brussels 1,796.62 (+90.90)
General 1,796.62 (+90.90)

Paris 3,680.13 (+4.78)
CAC-40 3,680.13 (+4.78)

Zurich 1,487.30 (+45.38)
SIX Gen 1,487.30 (+45.38)

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Honeymoon interrupted

JURGEN HINTZ'S honeymoon with the new chief executive of Caradon may be over before he has even formally taken up the job.

He is supposed to take over in May, but he has effectively been running the building products group since November. He was a welcome replacement for Peter Jansen, who is becoming chairman, but the reaction to Caradon's 1997 results and Mr Hintz's strategic vision was decidedly cool. The shares fell from 205p to 188p.

The doors and windows businesses in the UK and the US lost money in 1997. The fiasco over a £2 million advertising campaign for Eveready windows is the most humiliating part: the ads stimulated demand, but Caradon clumsily misjudged how many of its freelance installers would be available to fit them and Eveready volumes actually fell 4 per cent. The

two businesses will probably be sold at some stage, but estimates of their value yesterday started from as little as £140 million to £150 million - less than half their sales.

It makes sense to stop trying to position Eveready and other Caradon products as premium brands, and just concentrate on increasing sales. Customers were willing to shell out for the extra kudos in the 1980s, but not now.

The plan to expand plumbing and electrical towards a strong pan-European market position sounds logical, but it is unlikely to be an easy road.

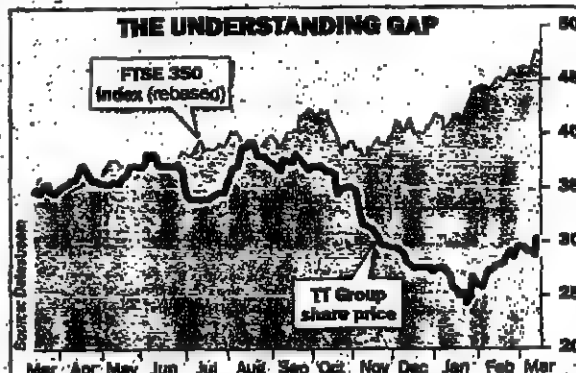
On a prospective p/e of about 12 for this year, the shares are too cheap to sell. Investors should hold on and let Mr Hintz prove himself, even though the City was in no mood yesterday to give him the benefit of the doubt.

TT Group

TT GROUP'S little joke is that it now has only two divisions. The industrial engineering division is tightly focused on connectors and fasteners, automotive, systems, generators, uninterruptible power supplies, wire and cables, architectural ironmongery, glass containers and packaging equipment. The other division makes electronic components. This is clearly a world away from being a diversified industrial.

Easy though it is to sympathise with TT's wish to be reclassified as an engineering company, it would be astonishing if it manages to persuade FTSE International with its latest regrouping. If TT is not a diversified industrial, what is?

TT has an excellent track record of growing its profits



TransTec

WHEN Richard Carr took control of TransTec from Geoffrey Robinson in 1994 he could not have predicted the public relations nightmare

More positively, Mr Carr is reasonably well-regarded and the City has welcomed his decision to reduce reliance on the company's automotive components division. Although yesterday's results are slightly disappointing against expectations of six months ago, they contain nothing to unduly alarm investors.

On this view, TransTec's shares look fair value. Amey

These days civil engineering is a bit more complicated than it used to be. The firms used to turn up at whichever government department was handing out the contracts and make a pitch. With privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative, the contractor has a much harder job winning the contracts, and working out how to make money out of the business.

Amey appears to be adapting well to the new regime. Having expanded in the rail contracting arena - where there is a shortage of good operators - it has seen turnover grow a fifth and has an order book stretching for more than 18 months.

Add to this a strong balance sheet and all seems set for Amey. Its shares have risen more than a third this year but there is no reason why this positive trend should not continue.

EDITED BY PAUL DURMAN

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCA

May 1081.00 Jun 1171.00

May 1094.00 Jun 1184.00

May 1108.00 Jun 1198.00

May 1122.00 Jun 1212.00

May 1136.00 Jun 1226.00

May 1150.00 Jun 1240.00

May 1164.00 Jun 1254.00

May 1178.00 Jun 1268.00

May 1192.00 Jun 1282.00

May 1206.00 Jun 1296.00

May 1220.00 Jun 1310.00

Battle to take the fear out of regulation

Risk is a concept that tends to sit uneasily within the framework of Government. Governments like certainty, the security of knowing that a crisis is not waiting just around the corner. Health scares, transport disasters and dangerous dogs are the stuff of ministerial nightmares — the unanticipated problems that all too often can break even the most glittering career.

This anti-risk attitude, inevitably, colours the Whitehall approach to regulation. When crises do break — as they have the rather unfortunate habit of doing only too frequently — it is only natural that the Government bows to the clamour from the "something must be done" brigade.

Governments can normally only blame everyone else for a disaster just once. The understandable instinct is to frame new legislation to try to "root-law" the problem effectively.

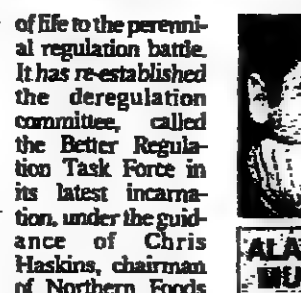
The crisis-regulation tendency runs deeper than ideology. It was a Conservative Gov-

ernment that rushed through legislation on child safety and outdoor pursuit courses after the death of a number of children in a canoeing accident. Even though the existing regulatory framework was sufficiently strong to prosecute the organiser for manslaughter, the Government, under pressure from the media, felt the need to introduce more stringent rules, putting it in danger of killing off the industry.

Business-friendly governments have long been keen to try to temper their own regulatory impulses. Deregulation committees existed as long ago as the Heath Government in the 1970s, always promising to slash the red-tape burden for businesses, but rarely delivering. Even the European Union is belatedly attempting to get in on the act, although its several hundred page multi-lingual epic — delivered at the recent EU conference on improving regulation — hardly bodes well.

Back in the UK, Labour is attempting to give a new lease

THE BUSINESS OF POLITICS



ALASDAIR MURRAY

of life to the perennial regulation battle. It has re-established the deregulation committee, called the Better Regulation Task Force in its latest incarnation, under the guidance of Chris Haskins, chairman of Northern Foods and a long-time Labour supporter. The committee is nominally run from the Cabinet Office but the feeling is that with the ultra business-sensitive Tony Blair keen to keep industry on-side, orders are as likely to emanate from Number 10 as from David Clark, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Much of the new committee's work is familiar. It is targeting what Mr Haskins calls the "festering sores" of licensing laws and food standards. It is also working hard

at improving the mechanisms for scrutinising legislation before it makes the statute book. With important legislation on childcare, the elderly and food standards on the horizon, there is a determination to try to avoid mistakes before regulation reaches Parliament, where the opportunity for change is limited.

Mr Haskins has given warning that the thrust of the food standards legislation, in particular, could have unforeseen and ridiculous consequences such as effectively prohibiting the annual Women's Institute cake sale.

The size of the task the committee faces has been highlighted by some serious knee-jerk behaviour in other areas of the Government, such

as over the beef-on-the-bone crisis. But Nigel Griffiths, the Consumer Affairs Minister, has also succeeded in conveying the impression that he wants to legislate out of existence any product that could pose even the tiniest threat to the consumer — much to the despair of task force members.

This is why Mr Haskins argues that his task is as much to try to push through a cultural change in Whitehall, and even at local authority level, as to iron out glitches in regulation. The task force has to become the champion of risk in Government, proscribing in the virtues of discretion in enforcement and the need for all arms of the Government to devise proportional responses to its problems.

This is much more than an attempt to devise a business-friendly approach. The better regulation drive has the potential to become a central part of the new Labour project. The flipside of a campaign to persuade Government that

risk is not only an inherent part of life, but also a necessity, is that the public has to be persuaded of the need to take more responsibility. A less clumsy approach to regulation should not only encourage a move away from dependency but will foster respect for the rules that are on the statute book.

Poor laws and regulations tend to undermine the whole system, prompting non-compliance and even ridicule as the beef-on-the-bone saga has amply demonstrated.

The logic of the Better Regulation approach could come straight from a Frank Field speech on welfare. No matter how well-intended the task force approach is, however, Labour will still have to overcome its equally strong instinct to pretend that it has all the answers.

When the next crisis breaks, the measure of Mr Haskins' success will be whether his risk-accommodating approach does more than fall on deaf ears.

MARKETING

Professions take brand new approach

Just in case you had not noticed, BDO Stoy Hayward has launched a £500,000 nationwide poster campaign. This is not the usual form of promotion for a firm of accountants. Why should a company that knows who it is targeting and where it can find them resort to an expensive mass market medium such as posters? Is there method in the madness?

It certainly shows the lengths to which some professional firms will go to get their brand name noticed. It is part of a wider trend among both the accountancy and legal professions to re-evaluate the way they market themselves.

It comes at a time of upheaval in both professions, as a super-league of firms emerges from a succession of acquisitions and mergers such as Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand, or in Arthur Andersen's case diversification. It has just signed up Wilde Sapte, the law firm, to its network.

Trailing in their wake is a second division, eager to establish themselves. And, in the ensuing scrum for market share, professional firms are going to rely increasingly on marketing and branding to give them an edge over their competitors.

Not so long ago these firms would have blanched at the thought of such brazen commercial methods as large-scale advertising. For years the professions have been marketing themselves, only they called it "practice development". Partners lunched, spoke at seminars, sent out letters and reports and swung a nine-tron to bring in the business. Little thought was given to exploiting the potential of the brand name.

As one ex-marketing director of a medium-sized legal firm can testify: "Partners are great ambassadors for their own patch, but are lost when it comes to raising awareness of the company brand."

But at this level, marketing in itself is no longer enough, says Richard Chaplin, who advises the Institute of Chartered Accountants on marketing matters. "You want to market your firm as the one that the client calls whenever there is a problem. To be that trusted business partner, not just someone who's there to do the tax forms."

Like the management consultants and advertising agencies before them, the professions are scrambling

for a place at the top table. This view is upheld by Allyson Stewart Allen, of the consultants International Marketing Partners, which specialises in marketing of the professions. She says they are some way behind their counterparts in other industries and the fee system ensures that partners are motivated primarily to build their own empires.

They tend not to care much about marketing, literature tends to be "egocentric" and focuses on the achievements and status of the firm rather than the benefits they can deliver to a client, follow-throughs of campaigns are almost non-existent and their view of the competition is myopic.

"The successful firms are the ones that are marketing themselves as business advisers and not just legal advisers," she says.

Which brings us back to why BDO Stoy Hayward is undertaking what appears to be such a radical move.

Richard Emanuel, marketing director, explains: "Too many firms are trying to build up expertise in too many niches; the client only ends up getting confused. We are trying to get one message across, which is about making your business grow and then offering clients the specialist services."

Mr Emanuel's solution is to associate the BDO brand with the virtues of sound advice and solid growth, rather than merely promoting services any number of his competitors can match.

The posters invite businesses to "Come here and multiply", and in the coming weeks 5,000 businessmen will receive a follow-up call. Expensive, perhaps, but necessary if one is trying to break the mould. "We could have written a lot more letters for that money, but letters themselves are no longer enough," says Mr Emanuel. BDO might be onto something. Findings from CSS, the market research company, tell us that marketing can be an effective method of influencing a buying decision. While less than half of finance directors could recall any specific marketing activity from accountants (perhaps explained by the paucity of traditional marketing methods), some 16 per cent said they were positively influenced by it.

JULIAN LEE

Ignorance will be no excuse for managers when the euro arrives

In *The Times* yesterday, John Redwood warned British companies not to be blinkered to the advent of the single currency. Today Laura Sandys argues that, even though Britain is not surfing the first wave into the euro, it offers companies the chance to gain competitive advantage

Whether one is politically pro or anti the single currency, there are some important business opportunities that should not be overlooked.

From January 1999 the single currency will be a reality for many of our trading partners. Good business means spending time and effort understanding the changes that overseas customers are experiencing. Just because it is not happening here will not excuse ignorance. Systems may need to be adapted, legal and financial teams will need to understand the implications of convergence and contractual changes may need to be made with suppliers or customers.

Just because transition to the euro will not be without difficulties or expense, there is no reason why companies should feel negative about the end result.

The key question for UK-based companies is, once EMU is a reality for their customers, suppliers and, of course, competitors, are UK businesses going to take a passive role and allow this all-pervading commercial change to impact upon them? Or are they going to evaluate the potential for commercial gain? There are two key opportunities that lie before the forward-thinking managing director. The first is to exploit the potential of cross-border consolidation from the beginning. The second is to use the new currency to gain a positive profile with customers — both on the Continent and in the UK. In many ways the transition process offers UK businesses a competitive advantage. Without the more complex internal structural changes that will impact in Germany, France and Benelux, the UK can exploit the cross-border opportunities. Launching new pan-European products, developing more cohesive distribution channels, taking advantage of new alliances and pursuing acquisitions should all be greatly assisted by EMU. The next few years could offer British companies the time to develop creative and profitable strategies with the assistance of the low-cost market



Laura Sandys says companies gunning for UK EMU entry should make the euro a part of everyday life

entry, centralised operations and marketing synergy, while the primary entrants are diverted by their internal restructuring. However, successful exploitation of this historic period in European trade and commerce requires one key factor that John Redwood unfortunately omitted in his article. UK companies need to show commercial enthusiasm and corporate leadership for working with the new currency.

Those companies that develop leadership strategies — reflecting Tony Blair's new approach to Europe —

can secure some important marketing advantages and enhance their investor credentials within the UK. As this transition process requires close consultation and communications through the supply chain, reaching eventually to the consumer, what better way for a company to develop and enhance its business relationships than being euro-positive? Those businesses that decide to educate their supply chain, those fast-moving consumer goods companies that enlighten the consumer, and those that use the single currency advantages to launch new products

in the UK, will be carving out significant market differentiation for themselves. The financial services sector will be able to exploit single currency marketing opportunities more than most. With the potential for euro financial products, we can expect a myriad of new ways to invest, save and borrow. However, in order for these products to be successful, the UK consumer will need to be educated about the benefits, establishing confidence and loyalty in this quintessentially European innovation.

Companies that service those with cross-border in-

terests will need to be ahead of the game. For example, fuel companies that provide fuel cards for the haulage industry will need to ensure that their systems can effectively manage euro transition. But, in addition to coping merely with the change, these suppliers could gain a marketing advantage by taking the responsibility to inform their customers, from the finance director to the trucker, of the implications of EMU. Special EMU giveaways and fun merchandising could supplement the traditional and boring "currency leaflet".

If the UK enters the single currency, retailers will need to manage the sharp end of single currency confusion. However, there are UK retailers today who either have pan-European outlets or cater for the tourist trade and will need to be dealing in euros. These retailers can make the most of their early involvement and use their experience to gain a marketing edge, leading consumer education and gaining loyalty for the future.

We should be ready to see the euro mortgage advertised on TV, euro converters given to schoolchildren by the forward-looking financial service companies, and euro collector coins available on cornflake packets.

Those companies that are gunning for UK EMU entry should use their market position to acclimatise the consumer, making the euro a part of everyday life, and breaking down the existing prejudices.

The most important tribute will be in five years' time if the UK corporate sector is able to proudly state that its enthusiasm and leadership has resulted in greater penetration of the European marketplace. All these without even the need to enter the single currency — this should make Mr Redwood very pleased.

Laura Sandys is managing director of LSA public corporate and political relations and has recently launched a Euro Communications Unit

German joke

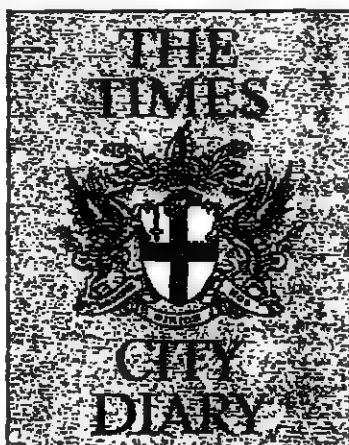
I WONDER just what was behind the full-page advertisements placed in *The Times* and a couple of other papers yesterday by Deutsche Börse, the German futures market and bitter rival to our own Liffe. It wasn't quite "Ze Vor is over for you now, Tommy, I think", but almost. With heavy-handed irony the Germans apologised for capturing 70 per cent of business in German government bond futures. They then offered their own trading system to Liffe, free.



Offer could have been made to Daniel Hodson last week

Liffe, which plans its own electronic trading system, said the German one is way out of date. All rival systems were evaluated, and it came bottom, by a long way. The Börse is well aware of this. The only assumption must be that it is an expensive joke, or, as Liffe would have it, the Germans are worried about the competition. If it was a sensible offer, why wasn't it made direct at the futures industry jamboree last week at Boca Raton, Florida, attended by everyone, including Jack Wigglesworth, Liffe's chairman, and Daniel Hodson, chief executive?

□ A CURIOUS tale from the City of London Cemetery and Crematorium in faraway and exotic Manor Park. There are eight miles of roads, and a white back somebody chose a Jaguar XJ6 Sport to ferry members of the public to the graves. The relevant sub-committee has been asked to approve retrospectively the £16,000 purchase of the car last October. And its immediate sale. "Whilst a car is needed to transport the public within the cemetery grounds, the Jaguar is not particularly suited or practicable for this purpose," the minutes say. It does rather beg the question, does it not, what they thought they were buying when they ordered a Jag?



Love all

MICHAEL DOBSON, chief executive of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, is the man who got out from under the Peter Young affair that cost poor Keith Percy his job. He then presided over the departure/bouncing out/sacking (take your choice) of Nicola Horlick. So it is probably safe to say that he is not universally popular. But someone loves him. Dobson today announces his engagement to Frances de Salis, who works in antiquarian books.

□ ANALYSTS at yesterday's briefing by Morgan Crucible went away

clutching a CD called Red Dragon, the latest offering by the premier Hungarian modern jazz group. (I will spot you about nine Norwegians, any number of Germans, a clutch of Russians, even the odd Pole, playing modern jazz. But no Hungarians, yet.) Gabor Kleinhencz used to play bass before he took up accountancy and ended up running Morgan Crucible's Hungarian operations. The company is sponsoring the second record he has put together using local musicians. Graham Sweetman, finance director, says deadpan: "This is not a core competency or area of diversification. EMI shouldn't worry."

What sort of jazz is it, I ask? The sort that sounds like farmyard animals being tortured to death in an iron lung, or Acker Bilk? "It's Hungarian jazz," he says uncertainly. Oddly enough, this is just what my previous two informants told me, so it seems no one is very certain.

Summit dreams

IF IT were me, I would be worried they were trying to tell me something. But Robert Owen, who has only been at ABN Amro for a month, has been given eight weeks to go away and climb Everest. This is the climbing season for the world's highest mountain, and it can look a bit like Broadgate on a busy day, but Owen, suitably an emerging markets salesman, flew out last night to shoulder

his way to the summit. He is, of course, the second City type to do so in recent months: Mark Warham of Schroders went last year. The climb is in aid of Big Orange Bus, the East Europe children's charity, and it was paid for by BZW, although they don't know it yet. Owen worked briefly for BZW's Japanese division before it was shut down, and he is devoting his redundancy money to the venture. And wisely proving his loyalty to his new employer by carrying an ABN Amro flag up to the top for planting on the summit.

MARTIN WALLER



Everest: another City man heads for the summit

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THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 24 1998

MANHATTAN LOFT CORPORATION

**LOFTS IN
CYBERSPACE**



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Modest losses at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
Guinness	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Harvey's	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Black & White	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
James Watson	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
BANKS					
Barclays	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
HSBC	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Midland	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
NatWest	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST					
Asahi	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Beck's	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Carlsberg	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Heineken	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Unilever	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Roche	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Novartis	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Glaxo	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
BUILDING MATERIALS					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
ELECTRONICS					
Virgin	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Virgin Media	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Virgin Atlantic	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Virgin Mobile	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
CHEMICALS					
Shell	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
BP	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Esso	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Agip	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT					
Next	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Primark	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Debenhams	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Woolworths	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
ENGINEERING					
Rolls Royce	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
BAE Systems	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
QinetiQ	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
BAE Systems	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
CONSTRUCTION					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
INSURANCE					
Aviva	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Prudential	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Legal & General	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Standard Life	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
DISTRIBUTORS					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
INVESTMENT TRUSTS					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
ENGINEERING, VEHICLES					
Rolls Royce	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
BAE Systems	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
QinetiQ	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
BAE Systems	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
FOOD MANUFACTURERS					
Unilever	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Roche	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Novartis	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Glaxo	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
OTHER FINANCIAL					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
MEDIA					
Virgin	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Virgin Media	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Virgin Atlantic	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Virgin Mobile	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
MINING					
Anglo American	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
De Beers	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Platinum	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Gold Fields	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
PROPERTY					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
LEISURE & HOTELS					
Virgin	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Virgin Media	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Virgin Atlantic	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Virgin Mobile	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
OIL & GAS					
Shell	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
BP	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Esso	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Agip	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
BRITISH FUNDS					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
SHORTS (under 5 years)					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
LONGS (over 15 years)					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
RETAILERS, GENERAL					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
OTHER FINANCIAL					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
PHARMACEUTICALS					
Unilever	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Roche	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Novartis	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Glaxo	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
SUPPORT SERVICES					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
PRINTING & PAPER					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
PROPERTY					
Investment Company	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Investment Trust	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Investment Fund	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Investment Scheme	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Virgin	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Virgin Media	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Virgin Atlantic	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Virgin Mobile	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
TRANSPORT					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
WATER					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
RETAILERS, FOOD					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Stock	High	Low	Open	Close	Change
INDEX-LINKED					
Woolworths	1.12	1.10	1.11	1.10	-0.01
Debenhams	1.08	1.06	1.07	1.06	-0.01
Next	1.04	1.02	1.03	1.02	-0.01
Primark	1.00	0.98	0.99	0.98	-0.01

Apprentice printers who forged unlikely alliance

VAT man to step up battle on tax dodgers

Smooth, Happy and Streetwise

While Gary Barlow was preparing to bring his solo show to London (see review below), Backstreet Boys played the first of three concerts at Wembley Arena. Since the demise of Barlow's former band Take That, the boy band throne has been occupied by Boyzone. But Backstreet Boys, from Orlando, Florida, are about to change that.

In just over a year they have had five consecutive Top Five singles while their second album, *Backstreet's Back*, has sold nine million copies since it was released last August. The band also carried off five awards, including the modest laurel of Best Band In The Entire Universe, at *Smash Hits* magazine's Annual Poll Winners Party, a barometer of teen tastes.

There is absolutely no doubt as to Backstreet Boys' appeal. Their Wembley crowd was almost exclusively made up of teenage girls, all intent on blowing whistles or screaming their lungs out. An early indication of exactly how much noise they were capable of making came an hour before showtime when a compere announced: "Nick's just come out of the shower."

The build-up continued until Backstreet Boys eventually appeared through a dramatic flash of light. Dressed in ski wear and goggles, they began with the rallying call of *That's The Way I Like It* and got straight into their carefully choreographed dance routine.

Backstreet Boys Wembley Arena

While not exactly America's answer to the Spice Girls, the boys too come from an acting, rather than a singing, background and could easily be marketed as five individuals.

The potential for this became clear when the five of them took it in turns to sing a solo. First there was Howie D, Smooth Boy, who looked as if he was trying a little too hard when he appeared out of a trap door with a bunch of red roses. He was followed by AJ, the tattooed Streetwise Boy, Kevin, Serious Boy, and Brian, Happy Boy, who came skipping on with an acoustic guitar. And then came Nick, the Boy Everyone Fancies, all floppy blond hair and sultry pouts.

Their synchronised singing and dance moves did not leave much room for spontaneity, although Howie D attempted to introduce some by "sacking" the backing band before their biggest hit, *All I Have To Give*, allowing the five of them to take over instead. The grand finale came with *Everybody* (Backstreet's Back), which climaxed with an impressive fireworks display. But the smart fans were already running round the back of the arena hoping for a glimpse of Nick after his post-show shower.

ANN SCANLON



Probably the Best Band In The Entire Universe: the five Backstreet Boys from Florida strut their slick stuff on stage at Wembley to a chorus of screams from the teens

It is always tempting to underplay Gary Barlow's success as a solo act, especially now that the career of his former Take That colleague, Robbie Williams, has taken off so spectacularly. But Barlow can still boast two No 1 singles and a million-selling album to his name. What he does not have is the outgoing manner and natural charisma that have enabled Williams to endear himself to critics and fans alike.

Arriving on stage in his dark blazer and black trousers, Barlow set off at an

Ready to Take That and party on

Gary Barlow Apollo, W6

material to which his performing style was ideally suited, although these songs certainly gave a valuable lift to the set.

Even so, as he eased into the mid-paced, disco trot of *Love Won't Wait*, it quickly became apparent that his authority

over this audience was absolute. The merest hint from Barlow that it was time to clap hands, wave arms or sing along was immediately and vigorously acted upon by the 3,000-strong crowd of admirers, most of them young and all overexcited.

But it was only when he switched gear for *My Commitment*, a power-pop ballad with a slight reggae lilt, that Barlow's strength as an enter-

tainor became fully apparent. After some initial show-boating, he sang the number with complete conviction, addressing the sentiment not to some imaginary third party but, as with so many of his songs, directly to the audience.

Then, sitting at a piano, he steered band and audience alike through a magnificent version of *Back for Good*, his voice drifting in and out of the

falsetto range with supple ease, as the preface to a surprisingly tasteful medley of Take That songs including *Love Ain't Here Anymore* and *A Million Love Songs*.

Maybe Barlow does lack the force of personality to be counted among the great live acts. But he sang well and presented an amiable front. Never smug or remote, generous to his band and hard-working almost to a fault, he put on a performance which commanded respect.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Take a medal for modernism

CONCERTS

At a time when orchestras are struggling for audiences, indeed for survival, it is heartening to report a solid turnout at the Barbican on Sunday for a concert unashamedly celebrating the good old-fashioned values of modernism. It was a very special occasion, for two reasons.

First, it was the second of two concerts in which Pierre Boulez, with the London Symphony Orchestra (in superb form), paid tribute to that unapologetic American modernist, Elliott Carter, on his 90th birthday. Secondly, the opportunity was taken for Boulez himself to receive the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal. In presenting it to him, Alfred Brendel cited Boulez's multifarious talents and achievements, praising his unwavering dedication to the cause in these days of "crossover" compromises.

This was the kind of repertoire that brings out the best in Boulez. Carter's *Symphony of Three Orchestras* (1976), effectively consists of three symphonies played simultaneously by the three orchestras into which the larger ensemble is divided. The composer's love of refracting present reality by the presentation of different planes of activity offers a daunting challenge to a single conductor, but not to Boulez, who could conduct a different orchestra with each

of his fingers if necessary. Here, his control of the ferocious surface activity was an object lesson in focusing on the essentials in a sea of conflicting currents.

No less impressive was the clear course he steered through another tough modernist score: Schoenberg's *Piano Concerto*. A work that can seem impenetrable in less secure hands here emerged with a lucidity and immediacy of expression that made one wonder why it is not heard more often. Perhaps because there are not many pianists like Ernstus Ax, prepared to commit themselves to its advocacy, or capable of striding the grand, rhetorical, post-Lisztian style in which it culminates.

This skillfully constructed programme began with Bartok's *Rustic Dance*, evoking a Debussian world of shadows and half-colours, before concluding in implacably funereal mood, Debussy's *La Mer*, under Boulez's control, never sounded merely sensual: it swept forward with inevitable logic on an unstoppable tide.

BARRY MELLINGTON

Protracted chill

Of all the many Winter Journeys undertaken here during the last year or so, this was by far the longest and most arduous. Every singer must find his "own way in this darkness", as the first song of Schubert's *Winterreise* has it. The German baritone Thomas Quasthoff, trudged in the snow for no less than one and a half hours, without interval or pause.

Speed, of course, is relative — and nowhere more so than in this cycle of no time, no place. A singer's tempi are judged by a complex of considerations: the weight of the voice — and Quasthoff is no lightweight, a personal instinct for the weight and measure of the words; and, ideally, a wider knowledge of the composer's writing. Quasthoff, and his obedient accompanist, Charles Spencer, had every right to choose what were often extremely slow speeds. The attention to detail within the first song alone revealed at once how deeply serious and intensely felt were Quasthoff's intentions. But with such daringly slow tempi, the music's inner tension has to be maintained by taut rhythmic definition, and by a shrewd judgment of the tem-

po relationship between songs.

This was the weak link in Quasthoff's and Spencer's performance. Too often momentum gained "within a song" by vivid phrasing and the most skilful and imaginative use of half-voice, would be lost by an overlong pause between songs, by a failure to pick up on an echoing pulse, to hear a related footnote. The pulse simply must race in *Die Post*, and the lightning-flash accents of *Der stürmische Morgen* must, surely, be the emotional charge which drives the wanderer out of town on to the never-ending journey, which Quasthoff's baritone followed with such dogged determination.

Quasthoff is singing with an ever-increasing agility and sharpness of focus. What he now needs is a firm musical sounding board for his own ideas, and an accompanist with whom he can fine-tune his own responses.

HILARY FINCH

Rescue mission

VERY much a game of two halves, as the football commentators would say. In the brief time she was on stage before the interval Fontella Bass gave a stirring lesson in unadorned, old-school gospel singing. Anticlimax beckoned. Having worked up a daunting head of steam, she never quite regained her momentum afterwards, seeming content to be almost a guest performer in her own show.

The audience, it has to be

GOSPEL

Fontella Bass
Barbican

said, seemed happy to hear her brother, David Peaston, go through his showy melismatic exercises once more, but it was Bass, after all, that we had really come to hear.

While she may usually be filed away as a one-hit wonder — it is more than 30 years since *Rescue Me* climbed into the Top Ten — Bass is no poor little songbird pining for former glories. A former pianist with the blues singer Little Milton, she sang jazz with her husband, the Art Ensemble trumpeter Lester Bowie. More recently she has returned to church music, and her most recent album *No Ways Tired* delivers rousing treatments of mainstream gospel material. In concert, Bass's stately voice stood comparison with Aretha Franklin at her most powerful, her organ player adding born-again ambience underneath the massed voices of the London-based Church of God in Christ choir.

But why she had to invite three men from the audience for a singalong on the climactic *Rescue Me* only she can answer. It was a relief to see the house lights come up.

CLIVE DAVIS

Stars twinkle and fall

OPERA

Samson et Dalila
New York Met

appropriate to Wagner: the tableau for *Lohengrin*'s first-act prelude, an empty blue stage with a huge horizontal bar of gleaming white light slowly rising, was magnificent.

The problems in Wilson's productions always come about when he has to deal with human singers. Heppner and Deborah Voigt, his Elsa, don't need any help from the producer when it comes to appearing stately and monumental, and they looked distinctly uncomfortable as they drifted across the stage like icebergs.

In the first act Deborah Polaski, as Ortrud, appeared to feel as ridiculous as she looked, waving played fingertips about as though trying to dry her nail varnish. Yet all three sang gloriously, though Polaski didn't have quite the power needed to carry her through the final phrase, and the orchestra played nobly for its music director, James Levine. The opening night audience gave the musicians a

standing ovation, with good reason, and soundly booed the producer-designer — one fears for the wrong reasons.

Coming to see Pavarotti these days is increasingly like watching an ageing trapeze artist perform. Will he make it to the end without a smash-up? In January, on the opening night of this revival of John Copley's silly production of *L'Esprit d'Amore*, he sang badly, and sometimes not at all; at a gala concert at the Met a few days later he lost his way in a scene from *Luisa Miller*, and failed to appear after the interval, owing to "an episode of lightheadedness".

In a performance of *L'Esprit* last week he sang well, at moments reminding one of his great past performances here in this role, particularly in his eloquently nuanced recitatives. Yet he was clearly in some physical discomfort, frequently having to sit down to pant and wipe perspiration from his face. Ruth Ann Swenson was delightful as Adina, while Paul Plishka brought only modest comic relief to his performance as Dulcamara. Maurizio Benini, in his first appearances at the Met, conducted.

JAMIE JAMES



Plácido Domingo (Samson) and Denyce Graves (Dalila)

Low budget gives Wagner a break

Das Rheingold
Leicester

Shock, horror, sensation: *Das Rheingold* performed with an interval, and this in a staging supported by the Wagner Society, whose catchword was fidelity to the composer. A breath of realism, I suppose, in the end it's not the music but the bar sales that count. It would have mattered less if someone had devised a concert ending and beginning, but the performance stopped in the middle of a musical sentence, and started up again half an hour later as if nothing had happened.

As Paul Crook and Malcolm Rivers indicated in their interview last week, this *Rheingold* is planned as a precursor of complete *Ring* cycles and a labour of love, funded with their own money. So one must proceed with tact and understanding. The audience in De Montfort Hall, who probably do not get to hear much Wagner, had a good time, but might do better to travel north

to Leeds or west to Birmingham to see his works done better. With the best will in the world, this really was not awfully good. Andrew Constantine conducted his largely amateur Bardic Orchestra. With more time, or rather money, the players might have gained greater confidence with the notes, made fewer false or tentative entries, and found more convincing balance between sections of the orchestra. Even so, they would have had trouble transcending their conductor's desperately workaday approach, fight years from the world of Reginald Goodall, to whose example the enterprise is dedicated.

Rivers and Crook make no secret of their dislike for most modern Wagner productions, but whether this rudimentary shoestring staging serves the composer better is a moot point. A cinema screen lit in green, blue and red, a dance-hall glitter-ball, one stool and bring-your-own-costumes, and that's it.

With their long experience in the roles, Rivers and Crook naturally did best as Alberich and Mime; the rest were left to their own devices. Neil Howlett, ex-ENO principal baritone and now director of repertoire at the Royal Northern College, sang strongly as Wotan and would doubtless give a less bland performance were it I dare mention the word, a producer involved. Oldsters got a nostalgic charge out of seeing a venerable, white-haired Alberto Remedio (Siegfried) in those Coliseum cycles 20 years ago) as Froh, his trumpet tones intact.

Ruth Peel made a mellifluous, firm-toned Erda, and Rebecca de Pont Davies a notable Flohilde, but the most interesting performance came from Richard Berkeley-Steele as Loge. He is a senior with a richly coloured middle voice as well as a top, and real musical imagination. He sings a lot of Wagner in Europe, and should do more here.

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La bohème

Puccini

Orthodox but never ordinary

Some of Russia's finest icons are on show in London.

Richard Cork is amazed by their power and variety.

Mounting a show of Russian icons in a gallery as cool and minimal as the Royal Academy's Sackler Wing could easily be calamitous. If exposed on bare white walls with merciless modern lighting the paintings would look desperately out of place. But if the exhibition organisers tried to reconstruct the icons' original candlelit habitat in cathedrals and monasteries, the result might well look phoney.

A middle course has to be pursued, and the Academy has found it. Photographs are discreetly deployed, hinting at the sumptuous interiors these paintings once occupied. Even so, nothing is allowed to interfere with the pictures. Hung on deep maroon walls, the icons are surrounded by an aura of dark mystery. Each exhibit is spotlighted within the gloom, enabling us to see every stroke of tempera more clearly than the former worshippers would have done.

But the battered panels are warmly illuminated, not raked by a bright glare. Their essential wonder is retained, and demands to be honoured with as much hushed reverence as a congregation would accord them in church.

Such an awkward reaction may seem impossible to achieve. How can late 20th-century Westerners respond to images painted, between 1400 and 1600, for a society so unlike our own? We are inculturated with a belief in the primacy of the individual, and our culture draws its energy from the need to challenge tradition.

In Moscow, by contrast, artists were expected to conform. As the Renaissance revolutionised ways of seeing across Europe, Russia resisted change. In 1551 the Council of the Hundred Chapters declared that "the painters will reproduce the ancient models, those of the Greek icon painters, of Andrei Rublev and other famous painters. In nothing will the painters follow their own fantasy."

It sounds like a tyrannical prescription for unbearably repetitive art. Maybe a colossal show of icons would indeed become tedious. But the Academy's, borrowed largely from the great museums of Moscow, is concise. Limited to 42 panel paintings and a few consummate, impeccably preserved miniatures, it is irresistible.

Even visitors who know nothing of the religious subjects depicted here can scarcely remain indifferent to the immediate, sensuous impact of the colours. Icon painters may have been expected to adopt an obedient attitude to exemplars from the past. But in terms of their palette, they were as uninhibited as the builders responsible for transforming

St Basil's into an arresting, multi-hued spectacle.

The unknown artist who painted *The Nativity*, for a chapel in the Kremlin's Cathedral of the Annunciation, did not hesitate to surround the reclining Virgin with an inflammatory band of scarlet. Intended to represent her bed, it can be savoured on an abstract level for the boldness of its assault on the retina.

No wonder the Russian avant-garde at the beginning of our century admired the icon tradition. The same vehement scarlet reappears in another *Nativity* hanging on the same wall. The two icons look identical at first. But then we realise how many differences they contain, and how these artists did manage to interpret their allotted subjects with freshness and conviction.

Look at the shepherds who stare at the Christ child. The first *Nativity* presents them as nervous observers, gazing

6 Icon painters often display an unexpected freedom

over their shoulders and ready to run away if detected. In the second, though, they bend forward avidly. One shepherd is so eager to peer that his garment has become hitched up round his buttocks. Byzantine rules are flouted here with surprising realism.

And in the cave where Jesus lies, a Disney-like animal opens its mouth with amazement at the infant in the manger. A note of comic exaggeration has been introduced, offering an unexpected contrast to the solemnity of the three nearby angels as they lean forward.

Throughout the survey, painters can be detected adding their own idiosyncratic inventions to the style they have inherited. In *The Ascension*, perspective is largely denied and the figures adhere to a traditional format. But a few saints let their feet jut out beyond the lower edge of the mountain. This illusionistic touch adds to the painting's vitality, and the artist may have derived an illicit thrill from wondering if his audacity would be condemned.

Within the bounds laid down by the commissioning authorities, these icon-painters display a remarkable amount of variety. The artist who produced the late 15th-century *Transfiguration* indulged in headlong drama.

Below the pinnacle of Mount Tabor, where the white-robed Christ reveals His shining divinity, saints tumble head-first down the rockface. As they plummet, each hides one eye from the dazzle above. But they make sure their other eyes are still trained on Jesus, whose radiance continues to hold them in its thrall.

Here, then, is an icon painter unafraid of depicting awkwardly straining limbs. But all this harshness disappears in another painting of Boris and Gleb, the first Russian Orthodox saints. The sons of the Grand Prince of Kiev, they were murdered in 1015. But their courageous acceptance of martyrdom elevated them to sainthood as the supernatural defenders of Russia. They appeared miraculously before battles, most notably when Alexander Nevsky led his soldiers to victory over the frozen lake. And in this icon they stand together, with extravagantly elongated bodies, as elegant and poised as in a Modigliani.

But it would be wrong to imagine that this poetic painting rebelled against the prevailing style. The distortions are typical of Moscow painting around 1500, and they also inform some outstanding *Virgin and Child* images. One, of a type known as *Hodegetria*, served a military purpose. It would have been taken into battle, providing a form of protection. Hence, perhaps, the sternness of the Virgin's expression as she holds the child in the crook of her arm. Both mother and son gaze outwards, apparently impervious to one another's presence.

Al that formality disappears in another, wholly enchanting *Virgin and Child*. This time, it belongs to the type called *Umlenie*, translatable as "she who knows mercy". Hungry for intimacy, the Virgin presses her left hand against the boy's shoulder, and leans her cheek against his in an immensely moving display of maternal devotion. He responds just as fervently. His smile contrasts with her frowning sadness, no doubt weighed down by an intimation of the tragedy ahead. But the overwhelming emotion generated by this panel is of fiercely protective love.

The more these icons are explored, the more demonstrative they become. Far from relying on static figures, the makers of the Deistic tier from the Koruli Komelski Monastery in Vologda emphasised the urgency of the four figures. Interceding with Christ, their heads bent forward and arms gesticulating, they could not be further removed from decorous passivity.

Ultimately, though, the mood of this exhibition is more



Sacred subjects painted in bold, bright colours: Saint George and the Dragon (State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow)

celebratory than anguished. The final icon shows the Virgin and Child enthroned in a circle of light. Worshipped by angels and the righteous in heaven, the holy pair remain grave. But the adoration surrounding them is heartfelt, and the Byzantine song of praise in the icon's title sums up the prevailing emotion: "In You, All Creation Exults."

● The Art of Holy Russia is at the Royal Academy (0171-439 7438) until June 14

AROUND THE GALLERIES

Andy Warhol was a purveyor of iconic images to the mass market. Hardly surprising, then, to find the faces of those who were famous for more than 15 minutes in this show. On the walls of Coskun & Co, visitors will recognise the sculpted profile of Alexander the Great, Beethoven scowling through a swirl of notes, the eerie red glare of Lenin and Liz Taylor's classic gaze.

More unusual, some of these prints have never been exhibited in London before. There is a monochrome Madonna (after Munch) of which only three or four other copies exist, and a unique self-portrait of the artist, purple lineaments etched against a gold background. The blank Czech with the platinum wig became an icon in his own right.

Coskun & Co, 56A Walton Street W1 (0171-581 9056) until April 28

"I WANT to carve mountains," Jacob Epstein once exclaimed. He meant that the sculptor should be true to his materials, the stonemason true to his stone. It is this passionate belief in "direct carving" that Carving Mountains celebrates. The exhibits themselves may not be mountainous — some are very small — but each is a beautifully honest monument to the stone carver's ancient art.

Starting with the relief carvings of Epstein, Gill and Gaudier-Brzeska, the exhibition progresses to the free-standing works of Skeaping, Hepworth and Moore, until the pure, abstract geometries of such artists as Ben Nicholson are reached. This is an alluringly tactile collection, but sadly all the pieces are under Perspex.

Kettle's Yard, Castle Street, Cambridge (01223 352124) until April 26

A QUIRKY vision sprawls across the spaces of the Chisenhale Gallery, an old East End factory. In an ambitious series of vast pencil drawings Paul Noble constructs the imaginary townscape of Nobson Newtown, complete with hospital, chemical plant and seaside palace. At first his work seems little more than a humorous exercise in social planning. But an accompanying booklet gives it a macabre edge.

Chisenhale Gallery, 64 Chisenhale Road, London E3 (0181-981 4518) until March 29

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A guide to the best available recordings, presented in conjunction with Radio 3

PROKOFIEV'S FIFTH SYMPHONY
Reviewed by Edward Seckerson

Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony was written in 1944, ten years after the bad boy of Soviet music had returned to the motherland after a long and fruitful exile. Had he been brought to heel? Was this his honest attempt at the great Soviet symphony, a public act of contrition for earlier indiscretions?

On the surface of it, it would seem to embrace old Russian values. In the beginning it is an epic, it portends great events. "I conceived it as a symphony of the grandeur of the human spirit," said the composer, "a song in praise of free and happy mankind."

Free and happy mankind? In the Soviet Union, circa 1944? No, scratch the surface of the Fifth Symphony and its composer is as proud, as defiant, as cynical, as impermanent as ever he was. This is a work coloured by many different experiences — an odyssey, if you like, destination unknown.

Perhaps the most surprising outcome of this survey, numbering some 30 recordings, is the poor showing of Russian conductors — including Mariss Jansons and the Leningrad Philharmonic (on Chandos), a performance generally held in high regard but brought low, in my view, by over-articulate, foursquare phrasing and an almost obsessive awareness of the barlines. Only Gennady Rozhdest-

vensky with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, in a BBC Radio Classics recording taken live from the 1971 Proms, truly belongs among the top contenders. Here is that rare thing: a Russian performance more notable for its refinement than its robustness. But something is missing. Partly on account of the recessed recording image, the effect, dramatically speaking, is a little low-key.

Not so Koussevitzky's pioneering account from 1946 — impatient, ever rash — or Mravinsky's wild and woolly reading from 1968, if you can put up with his eccentricities and the raw sound. Then there's Walter Weller and the London Symphony Orchestra on Decca, seriously impressive but not many laughs.

Simon Rattle with his City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra on EMI is certainly a front-runner, ever attentive to the infinite subtleties of Prokofiev's scoring and with a great nose for atmosphere. But I do not yet feel him inhabiting the piece, as Herbert von Karajan (and the luminous Berlin Philharmonic, on DG) and Michael Tilson Thomas (and the LSO), do.

With Karajan one is more conscious of Prokofiev embracing tradition; with Tilson Thomas (Sony Classical SMK 48239 £9.99), he is turning somersaults with it. So Tilson Thomas, behaving badly, emerges as a clear first choice. Remember, Prokofiev did not leave his rebellious nature in exile.

● To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times Music Shop to FREEPOST, SCO681, Forbes, IV36 0BR or phone 0245 023 458; e-mail: music@the-times.co.uk

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LAW

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Value of working for free

The Pro Bono Group is on a recruitment drive, says Frances Gibb

Call it a stirring of the profession's conscience or a cynical ploy to improve a poor public image. Either way, solicitors are doing what may seem unthinkable: they are working for free. In truth, solicitors have always done work unpaid — or work *pro bono publico*, as it is called. But now it is being formalised, given a framework both nationally and within law firms themselves.

Next month the Solicitors Pro Bono Group, set up in November 1996 to co-ordinate *pro bono* work within the profession, launches a national membership drive with the backing of the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill. The idea is to persuade every one of 10,000 law firms in England and Wales to sign up, so that there is a countrywide network and not just patchwork provision.

Peta Sweet, the group's director, says: "What we are trying to do is to change the culture. We're saying: *pro bono* work is of value to you as lawyers, to the community you serve — it is not just about giving something for free."

Inevitably, tensions exist. High street law firms, many struggling to meet overheads, have always put in many hours of unpaid work. Why should they do more, some ask. Others also argue that it lets the Government off the hook, enabling it to withdraw legal aid with a clear conscience. Some City law firms have also done their bit: many, for example, send their lawyers to law centres; serve on the panel that acts for deathrow prisoners in cases before the Privy Council; or give free advice to charitable groups. Yet others need persuading: the commitment requires a more positive effort because it does not link naturally with their clientele.



Marta Inskip complained to the district auditor about misused assets

There is also the question of publicity: good PR can persuade solicitors of the benefits of *pro bono* but that is not why they should be doing it. Some solicitors are cynical about those they claim have jumped on the *pro bono* bandwagon. But altruism alone may not draw large numbers: solicitors have also to be persuaded of the benefits.

The debate is aired in a timely new College of Law television training programme, which will be used as part of solicitors' (now compulsory) continuing education.

Nigel Savage, the chief executive of the College of Law, is keen that it should become an automatic part of training. "Firms can derive a number of substantial benefits from *pro bono* work, not simply public profile. In larger firms, it can also provide opportunities for younger lawyers to develop their advocacy skills in representing clients in tribunals."

Younger solicitors, in particular, want to know what *pro bono* work a firm does. "Some parts of the profession have become divorced from their client base," says Sweet. "They have become specialised. But solicitors daily drafting commercial franchise agreements are now asking after five years — what am I doing?" She says there is a move away from the Eighties ethos back to what law is about — helping people.

The culture of firms can also gain. Andrew Phillips, of Bates Wells & Braithwaite and founder of the Pro Bono Group, says *pro bono* work can bring "a more liberal feel about the place which leads to a much greater enjoyment and sense of cohesion, allows a wider type of personality and character to thrive. And that makes the firm better in its mainstream work, for which it is getting paid."

There are concrete signs that firms are paying *pro bono*

more than lip service. Lovell White Durrant has appointed Yasmin Waljee as its first full-time *pro bono* officer. She fields up to 15 inquiries a week — from individuals, law centres and advice bureaux — and sorts out legal advice. It may mean representation at a tribunal, or a team of lawyers for complex commercial transaction. But high street law firms can also do their bit: McGrath & Co in Birmingham is a legal aid practice but does much work free where it is not covered by legal aid. It ranges from a 24-hour advice line for travellers to a help pack for housing claims.

Rusamund Smith, a solicitor at Bates Wells, helped two women in a long-running battle over the accounts of Avon County Council and Bath City Council. Marta Inskip, 73, and Stella Pierce, 64, launched a complaint to the district auditor, arguing that the councils had misused



Above: Yasmin Waljee, *pro bono* officer
Below: Peta Sweet, group director



Cases haunted by the spectre of failure

A couple who claim that their home in Derbyshire is haunted are suing the previous owner for not telling them about its alleged paranormal history.

Andrew and Josie Smith, who paid £41,000 for a cottage in Upper Mayfield, say that only after moving in did they become aware of an "evil presence", which was manifested by sudden drops in temperature, objects moving of their own accord and a sense of being touched in the night. They believe that the ghost of a milkmaid, who had died while locked in the cellar, creates "a living hell" for mortals who live there.

The Smiths' legal complaint is that the property had a bad reputation locally, about which they should have been told. The vendor, Susan Melbourne, is resisting the claim. She is suing the Smiths for £3,000 still owing on the purchase price. She says that she grew up in the cottage and "nothing strange happened to me at all".

In 1991, the Supreme Court of New York, Appellate Division, decided a similar case in favour of a purchaser of property who was unhappy about sharing it with ghosts. Jeffrey M. Stambovsky discovered, to his horror, that the house he had contracted to buy had a reputation for being possessed by poltergeists. The defendant seller, Helen Ackley, had "seen" the ghosts on numerous occasions over the previous nine years.

She had reported such events to the *Reader's Digest* and to the local newspaper, and the publicity had damaged the value of the property.

On behalf of three of the five judges, Justice Rubin recognised the practical problem the purchaser faced in proving the existence of paranormal phenomena. Citing the title song to the film *Ghostbusters*, he asked: "Who you gonna call?" He considered that whether the source of the apparitions seen by the vendor, Mrs Ackley, was physical or psychological, she was, in law, prevented from denying their existence because of her own promotional efforts. Therefore, said Justice Rubin, "as a matter of law, the house is haunted".

The judge concluded that he was "moved by the spirit of equity" to allow Mr Stambovsky to rescind the contract and recover his down payment because of the vendor's failure to disclose her belief that the house was haunted. Furthermore, Mrs Ackley had not delivered "vacant possession", as required by the contract of sale, because of the presence of the ghosts.

The two dissenting judges applied normal, rather than paranormal, principles of law. Judge Smith suggested that "the existence of a

poltergeist is no more binding upon the defendants than it is upon this court". As he pointed out, if the doctrine of *caveat emptor* were to be discarded, "it should be for a reason more substantive than a poltergeist".

An English county court hearing Andrew and Josie Smith's case is very likely to follow the minority rather than the majority decision in *Stambovsky v Ackley*. Though litigants and lawyers are often shocked by what happens in court, it is rarely the consequence of supernatural phenomena. Things that go bump in the night tend to make little noise in the courtroom.

In 1944, the Court of Criminal Appeal dismissed an appeal by Helen Duncan against her conviction at the Old Bailey for offences under the Witchcraft Act 1735 by pretending to call up the spirits of deceased persons. Mrs Duncan, in association with her spirit guide "Albert", was a professional spiritualist medium. In the Court of Appeal, the Lord Chief Justice, Viscount Caldecote, was unimpressed by her counsel's argument that the trial judge had erred by refusing to allow her to demonstrate her powers to the jury.

The Lord Chief Justice thought that such a demonstration would pose "obvious difficulties". Suppose, he wondered, that "ecstasies" was alleged to emanate from the medium. Would the jury be allowed to handle it or to do anything to verify the appearance? A similar approach would be taken today on a prosecution under the Fraudulent Mediums Act 1951.

Ghosts may themselves be respectful of the legal process. I am indebted to my friend Cyril Glasser, of the solicitors Sheridans, and an expert in laws spiritual as well as temporal, for drawing to my attention a report in this newspaper some years ago of an investigation into a violent death in India. At a seance, the victim's spirit was asked whether she had been murdered or had committed suicide. She answered: "I shan't tell." Asked why, the spirit replied: "Don't you know the matter is sub judice?"

Counsel for Andrew and Josie Smith in the county court in Derbyshire will, no doubt, echo the ghost in *Hamlet* by pleading: "Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing to what I shall unfold." Counsel may even cite the speech of Lord Atkin in a 1940 judgment that when "ghosts of the past stand in the path of justice clanking their medieval chains, the proper course for the judge is to pass through them undeterred". But rational observers must conclude that the Smiths don't have a ghost of a chance of winning their case.

● The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.



COUNSEL
DAVID
PANNUCK QC

£20,000 award for a company victim

MRS A, a foreign national, wanted to bring a claim for constructive dismissal and racial discrimination after she was forced to leave her part-time job with a major company.

She maintained that she suffered years of ridicule and unfair treatment at the hands of colleagues and management, which resulted in severe depression. She was unable to work again.

A firm of solicitors started some work for her, but quickly overreached the £2,000 estimate for going to an industrial

tribunal. Her former employer was represented by a City law firm.

She was referred by Acton Law Shop to Clifford Chance, the biggest firm in the country, which did her case *pro bono*.

The senior litigation lawyer who handled her case said: "When the case arrived, the client's position was difficult... we faced a strike-out application and survived this on condition that the claim document needed tidying up."

The work involved three substantial preliminary hearings and the case was

listed for a two-week hearing. Shortly beforehand, it was settled and Mrs A received some £20,000.

In all, the firm spent almost 100 hours of senior lawyer time and 50 hours of trainee/paralegal time. The total cost, if the case had gone to trial, could have cost £60,000.

She said: "It was a very good service. Legal aid is not available for tribunals and it would have been impossible for me to afford to bring the case out of my own money."

citors" and back-up staff to provide legal help to people who want to represent themselves. The new grants follow two-year funding agreed by the previous Lord Chancellor.

● The Law Society of Scotland has opened a "trial a law service" offering legal information to the public. Callers will hear recorded information from Austin Lafferty, a lawyer and broadcaster, on more than 40 topics from bail to buying a property. The idea, intended to appeal to people who find contacting a solicitor daunting, is based on a similar project in Victoria, Australia.

Ad or subtract NOW THAT the Government has announced its plans to reform legal aid, the Law Society faces a delicate decision. Should it run a national advertising campaign opposing the plans?

The society has achieved some dilution of the reforms, but it still has concerns. Trouble is, the ads are already designed and one source describes them as "very hard-hitting". Will the society just annoy the Government by using them?

SCRIVENOR

Society climber?

THE practice of giving Law Society Presidents automatic knighthoods ended several years ago. Now, perhaps, the post may come to be seen as a good way for solicitors to improve their chances of becoming judges.

Last week Charles Ely, a former Law Society President — once famously embroiled in a furious row with the Legal Aid Board after he

described it as "a downcast institution, riven by internal dissension" — was made a circuit judge.

That attack, made in 1994 when Mr Ely was Law Society vice-president, was described by Steve Orchard, a Legal Aid Board's chief executive, as "disgraceful" and "gratuitously offensive". But the dispute, rightly, had no effect on his rise up the judicial

rank: a few months later he was made a Recorder.

Political adviser LORD NOLAN gave up his usual occupation of celebrating St Patrick's Day by checking on the lambing at his home last week. Instead, he gave the tenth annual Essex law lecture at the University of Essex, where he is Chancellor.

He spoke — not surprisingly — on corruption, and said his chairmanship of the Committee on Standards in Public Life had not made him cynical. He went further, urging students to consider politics because it was an "honourable profession". If they wanted to make a difference in the world, a political career was what they should consider.

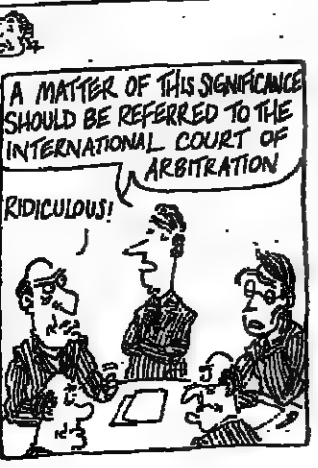
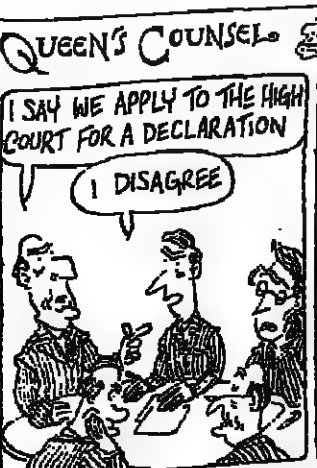
DIY cash MORE HELP for litigants in person: the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, has approved a three-year grant, starting with £84,500 in the first year, for the Citizens Advice Bureau at the Royal Courts of Justice. The money will pay for two "gateway soli-



Path stays public

Ramblers win case

IN ANOTHER High Court ruling, the Ramblers Association won a case which should deter developers from building on public paths. A developer erected a garage illegally then tried to knock down half before the public inquiry. John Trevelyan, director of the RA, said: "Developers will have to be more careful when developing sites crossed by public paths."



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Our client is a leading American house, with an extensive global network. The group legal department now requires an additional member to be based in London for an international role.

With 4-7 years' relevant experience, the successful candidate will enjoy a position of some autonomy, but with the benefit of the global legal resource. The focus will be on credit transactions and structured financing, but an agile mind and broad experience will be beneficial. The scope of advice could encompass securities, tax-driven financing, FX and currency issues and other banking/financial services activity.

Global Investment Bank

Debt/Equity Lawyer

This integrated global house is a premier provider of financial services to corporates, institutional investors and sovereign bodies across the world.

The European legal department is based in London and seeks a lawyer with 2½-4 years' experience to join a small team advising the sales/trading teams. Primary responsibilities will encompass debt transactions, with an emphasis on structured work and those with a derivative component. However, the successful candidate would also be involved in equities and stand-alone projects. Significant daily interaction with business units will be central to this role.

LONDON

HEAD of LITIGATION

Are you a frustrated senior assistant or junior partner with more drive and development skills than your boss? This high profile, internationally focused firm recognises merit without requiring you to do your line, and seeks a top light commercial lawyer to develop their contentious practice. Drawing from an existing client base in many key areas you will have full support to expand in which ever direction you see fit — one offer only, not to be repeated.

CONSTRUCTION

Looking to build on past success? If you are a talented construction lawyer (primarily contentious with an industry/engineering qualification) at the 2-4 years level then you should consider joining this thriving construction department in a friendly but focused Central London practice. Acting for many of the big names, career progression will be according to merit, and rewards will be excellent.

CORPORATE FINANCE

A corporate department which is at the heart of this very successful firm — and which continues to go from strength to strength. The emphasis is on high profile cross border work and the team consists of energetic solicitors who both work and play hard. If you are a 5+ year, really value your career and would like to work in a firm which would really value you, call us now!

CORPORATE TAX

Distinctly different, this uniquely successful, energetic, medium-sized City firm seeks a strong individual (3-4 years pp) with corporate tax experience, to join its highly recommended and multi-partnered team, acting for household names — this is an opportunity to join the rising star of firms in London, and shouldn't be missed!

EMPLOYMENT

Invigorated by the successful development of their Employment unit, this medium-sized Central London firm seeks to capitalise upon its enhanced reputation in this field by appointing a senior employment law specialist. This partnership role provides the perfect environment for a talented practice developer.

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

Major player in several specialist areas this c15 partner City practice seeks a dynamic senior property lawyer, preferably with a niche property specialisation or very strong contacts in an industry sector, to help spearhead the property department's growth. Strong client development skills are a prerequisite. Partnership and excellent remuneration offered.

INSOLVENCY

A highly regarded, long established City firm our client's diversification into profitable, niche areas has attracted the close attention of its peers. A high calibre insolvency specialist is sought to take over a full caseload (non-contentious bias) from a senior practitioner. This exceptional position will suit an ambitious 'City' assistant of 2 years' pp or an existing partner.

CORPORATE

The market leading companies and institutions that this dynamic firm acts for believe their c20 partner size. Their talented corporate team now requires an equally dedicated lawyer with 1-3 years relevant pp to join their department where ability and commitment will be rewarded from the outset.

PROPERTY LITIGATION

This international law firm seeks a 3-5 years qualified property litigator for its specialist London department, dealing with all forms of property dispute resolution for developers, retailers and institutional clients. If you are keen to work in a professional environment with excellent support, and career prospects are of major importance to you this opportunity should not be missed.

To discuss any of the above appointments in detail, please contact Penny Tempest, Anita Gohil or Sarah King on 0171 404 6669 (evenings/weekends 01252 715302), or write to us, in complete confidence, at 44/45 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1JH. Fax: 0171 404 8817.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

THE OPPORTUNITY

Due to expansion across the organisation, we are seeking to appoint several lawyers to join the existing legal team to take responsibility for a range of legal and business issues.

THE INDIVIDUALS

You will have at least four years' experience in financial services gained in-house or within a major UK, US or other law firm. You will need to demonstrate:

- Strong commercial pragmatism;
- Individualism and initiative, while also being a strong team player;
- Experience of at least some investment management issues, for example UK and International funds, retail products, institutional and private client documentation and regulatory requirements;
- The ability to deal effectively with varied business situations and to respond to the needs of operating divisions;

If you would like to discuss this opportunity further please contact our retained consultant, June Mesrie, on 0171 405 6062 (0181 442 0841 evenings/weekends) or write to her at QD In-House Legal, 37-41 Bedford Row, London, WC1R 4JH. Confidential fax 0171 831 6394. QD In-House Legal are acting on an exclusive basis and all direct and third party applications will be forwarded to them.

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Legal work is supervised from the City head office where the team advises on: the analysis and execution of potential acquisitions (both domestic and international); legal issues arising out of core business; complex employment issues; litigation and regulatory work; the drafting and execution of a wide variety of commercial contracts and the management of external professional advisers throughout the world.

The Company has increased turnover by over 500% in the past 10 years, which has resulted in a sustained increase in legal work. Rapid growth is projected to continue well beyond 1998. As a result, an additional in-house lawyer is required with between 3 and 5 years' experience to work within the existing team, reporting to the Head of Legal.

Applicants with a demonstrable interest in, and a knowledge of, the insurance markets are all of interest - particularly those with non-contentious experience. In addition, you must display versatility and a genuine flair for teamwork.

For further information in complete confidence please contact our retained consultants, Lizzie Orange or Lisa Owens, on 0171 523 3822 (0181 740 4108 evenings/weekends) or write to them at ZMB Industry, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PY. Confidential fax 0171 523 3822. E-mail lizzie@zmb.co.uk ZMB Industry, a Zarak Group Company.

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INDUSTRY

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INTERNATIONAL COMM 3-5yrs
Surrey - Successful multinational seeks bright, City trained co/comm specialist to join small legal team in fast moving environment. The focus is on international commercial work, but some corporate experience would be useful.

COMMERCIAL c.5yrs
London - Major international trading house seeks ambitious commercial lawyer to advise on trading, sales, distribution, JV's, financing and EC law. Good package and opportunity for overseas secondment.

EDINBURGH c.1-2yrs
Superb opening for bright, young commercial lawyer in small legal team of high profile international PLC. Role involves negotiating, drafting and giving proactive advice on a wide range of contractual, IP & competition issues.

IP / COMMERCIAL 4-7yrs
Wiltshire - Unique opportunity for an energetic, business minded lawyer to join dynamic company, a world leader in its field. International workload, with emphasis on IP and commercial issues, esp. licensing & distribution agreements. You will also be part of a core management team, participating in high level business negotiations. International travel.

INTELLECTUAL PROP 2-4yrs
W. London - Young IP lawyer to join highly regarded legal team of blue chip FMCG co, a world leader in marketing & branding. Varied, high quality workload. Chemistry background and/or patent experience preferred.

COMMERCIAL Insurance Co 2-4yrs
London - Bright, adaptable lawyer to join respected legal team of market leader, handling a varied general commercial workload. Insurance sector experience not necessary. Lively, supportive environment, excellent career prospects & generous package.

BIRMINGHAM
Outstanding career opportunity at major firm for lawyer (4yrs ppe+) with solid track record in I.T./Computer law. Hands-on partnership prospects and high quality work on offer.

OXFORD Intellectual Property
Excellent opportunity for bright I.P. lawyer (1-3 yrs ppe) to join major regional practice and work alongside one of the region's leading practitioners. High quality work and attractive prospects.

THAMES VALLEY Corporate
A number of excellent opportunities exist with premier Oxford/Reading firms committed to the further expansion of their flourishing Corporate departments. If you are a junior lawyer (including NQ) at a major London/regional firm, please call to discuss these opportunities.

VENTURE CAPITAL 1-5yrs
Famously opportunity for high calibre company lawyer in this prestigious medium-sized City firm. Role offers front line involvement in broad range of exciting deals. Excellent remuneration.

EMPLOYMENT 1-4yrs
Due to fantastic growth, this friendly Holborn firm seeks an additional lawyer to join its young employment team. A terrific opportunity to make a mark.

OFFSHORE TRUSTS Junior Partner
A number of medium-sized City firms are now expanding their Tax Planning capability at junior partner level in response to a thriving clientbase. Specific knowledge of offshore trusts and capital taxation matters required.

Please contact us on 0171 430 1711 or write to us at Graham Gill & Young Legal Recruitment, 46 Kingsway, London: WC2B 6EN. Fax 0171 831 4186.

PATENT LITIGATION 0-2yrs
Leading firm in this field seeks newly or recently qualified lawyer with scientific background & patent exp/ce gained during articles or in industry. Superb caseload.

CORPORATE TAX Mar/Sep 98 qual
Leading firm seeks a bright and ambitious newly qualified lawyer seeking to specialise in corporate tax. Broad transactional and advisory caseload of highest quality.

COMMERCIAL LITIGATOR 2-4yrs
Highly successful Holborn firm seeks dynamic commercial litigator to join its thriving team to undertake genuine mix of top commercial litigation work.

EC/COMPETITION Brussels
Due to expansion, highly regarded MNP with extensive network of international offices seeks two lawyers: at 2-4yr ppe and senior associate level. V. attractive package.

CO-COMM 1-3yrs
Well-established c.20 partner firm with strong international client base seeks junior co-comm lawyer. Opportunity to handle interesting and varied cross-border caseload. Mainly private company caseload.

COMMERCIAL 2-4yrs
Rare opportunity in this innovative City firm to handle an extensive range of pure commercial work (with a strong international flavour) in a congenial working environment.

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Our client is a major US Multinational in the services sector, with a market capitalisation of US \$10 billion. The Company continues to grow dramatically in the US and Continental Europe as the result of an aggressive M&A program. The recently established European legal function plays a pivotal role in the international acquisitions process, in addition to a broad range of more general corporate work. The Legal Counsel now seeks to recruit an entrepreneurial legal professional as a deputy, to play an important role in the implementation and further refinement of a winning international acquisition strategy for the Group.

The Position

- Report to the Legal Counsel, with a brief to help further develop the legal function in Europe.
- Work closely with the Corporate Development team as well as senior, regional and local management in the acquisition process.
- Evaluate potential acquisition targets and play a leading role in negotiating and concluding transactions, managing third party advisors as appropriate.
- Oversee the smooth integration of newly acquired companies into the Group structure.
- More broadly, provide legal input for a diverse range of international projects encompassing marketing, compliance and employment issues.

The Requirements

- A senior company/commercial lawyer, with approximately five years' PQE, currently working in either private practice or a progressive corporate.
- Strong corporate finance/M&A experience along with a solid company/commercial base.
- Ability to make sound commercial judgments in a multi-cultural and relatively unstructured environment.
- Persuasive and perceptive individual, with a high degree of maturity and sensitivity, adept at developing successful relationships with colleagues and external advisors.
- Fluency in German is essential and a second European language would be highly advantageous.

Please send your CV with current salary details to: David Burton, K/F Selection, 252 Regent Street, London W1R 6HL, quoting ref: 9026991/02.

Alternatively send by fax on 0171-312 3380 or by e-mail to kfs-london@kornferry.com Internet Home Page: <http://www.kfsselection.com>

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As a result of the expansion of this business we are seeking a 2-3 ppe lawyer with banking, structured trade finance, project finance or capital markets experience, gained either a financial institution or from a mainstream law firm, to become a key member of this team providing advice and guidance on all legal matters relating to this business area. As well as providing day to day advice to the team your remit will include a transaction management role, liaising with external counsel, conducting negotiations on behalf of the Bank and internal reporting to senior management.

You will be able to demonstrate initiative, resolve legal issues with practical solutions, possess the ability to assess risks and work closely with colleagues. As you will be part of the commercial team this position requires an enthusiastic but flexible and down-to-earth attitude.

If you are interested in this position please write with your details enclosing full CV to: J M Crowley, legal Department Manager, Credit Lyonnais Rouse Limited, Broadwalk House, 5 Appold Street, London, EC2A 2DA, Fax: 0171 214 6469. Alternatively if you would like to find out more about the position please telephone J M Crowley on 0171 214 6433 or C A Mason on 0171 214 6462.

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Minor details

It's remarkable how small details can be decisive if they're regarded as significant.

A candidate with an excellent background in corporate work was interviewed by a large City firm. He performed sufficiently well to be called back for a second interview, where he was grilled for an hour on his transactional experience. Again, he did well, giving the right technical answers. The interviewers were impressed. There was something about his manner, however - a slight coyness, a hint of indecisiveness - which worried the interviewers. Nothing so negative that they would reject him, but enough to raise questions. When he left, they watched through the window as he walked away, and what they saw tipped the balance against him. He seemed casually down the street as if unsure where he was going. He didn't actually look, but there was nothing businesslike about his manner. In spite of his technical excellence, no offer was made.

It's a mistake to regard an interview as if it's an exam, where you're judged only by your performance in the examination itself. Everything you do can be taken into account. How you apply, how you deal with secretaries and receptionists, what you do afterwards. Unfortunately, you can never know what aspects they'll be watching, and what behaviour they'll regard as significant.

Michael Chambers

CHAMBERS' DIRECTORY
Our legal directory is available from Blooms, (01403 - 710 971)

INDUSTRY Soriya Rayner, Morwenna Lewis, Aileen Shepherd, Fiona Boxall

Commercial Lawyer: M4 Corridor
Commercial lawyer with 2-5 years' ppe for expanding dept of well-known international services company to handle general commercial law, contract negotiation and employment law. In-house background desirable.

Legal Adviser: North Surrey
Sole with min 2 years' ppe in commercial and corporate matters to join international services co & work closely with senior management. Occasional foreign travel.

Property/Planning: Bracknell
Junior solicitor c. 1-2 years' ppe for new position handling mixed property/planning caseload with small friendly in-house team. Opportunity to become involved in environmental law matters too.

PRIVATE PRACTICE LONDON: David Woolfson, Paul Thomas

INSOLVENCY PARTNER: City
One of the City's most profitable practices requires a senior solicitor/partner designate to handle high quality contentious and non-contentious caseload.

IT/Telecoms: City
Specialist team seeks an assistant solicitor to handle work which will be both diverse and of the highest quality. Prospects are excellent.

Senior Corporate: Holborn
Thriving medium-sized firm offers senior solicitor excellent partnership prospects and full range of mainly private company work.

Litigation: West End
Successful regional firm seeks to expand its London office and requires an experienced litigator to co-ordinate its expansion.

Commercial Property: West End
Gem of a niche firm with outstanding blue chip clientele seeks 4-7 year qualified solicitor for broad caseload. Major acquisitions in £14-50 million range.

Insurance Lawyer: City
High profile role for solicitor with exp/ce of insurance gained in-house or in private practice to join successful law firm. Must enjoy working closely with management.

Hi-tech/Corporate: West London
Opportunity to create new role with hi-tech subsidiary of major int'l aviation co. Min 7 years' ppe and background in corporate matters essential. Ideally candidates will have experience of IT/technological legal issues.

Legal Adviser: West End
Energetic lawyer min 3 years' ppe for challenging role as sole lawyer handling M&A, employment and commercial issues in fast moving environment of rapidly expanding services company.

Construction: West End
Highly regarded medium-sized practice requires an ambitious and motivated assistant solicitor to handle matters for UK and international clients.

Corporate: City
Medium/large City firm, the most international practice of its size, offers 2-4 yr qual solicitor fulfilling combination of high quality work and reasonable working hours.

Fraud: City
Top ten practice seeks a senior solicitor to handle high profile matters with a banking/finance bias. Previous City experience is required.

Company/Commercial: City
Top quality medium-sized firm is distinctive for encouraging its corporate lawyers to handle commercial work as well. 1-3 yr qual solicitor sought.

Probate/Trust: Surrey
Respected small practice noted for its private client work requires 2-4 yr qual solicitor to handle full caseload on behalf of wealthy individuals. Clear path to partnership.

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Contingency fees are being touted as justice for all. But David McIntosh raises a cautionary note

A case of no win, no fee, no way?

Lawyers who do commercial litigation will soon have to take note of what may prove to be the disadvantage of US-style contingency fees. It will soon be open to all solicitors to offer conditional fee arrangements — "no win, no fee" — in any case involving a claim over money or damages, and charge up to 100 per cent of normal fees, depending on the risk taken.

No doubt many business clients will wish to explore the advantages of "no win, no fee" retainers. Even if they risk paying the defendants' costs if their claim fails — and insurers are devising schemes to cover this — the financial attraction of not having to pay their own lawyer as the case proceeds, or not at all if it fails, is bound to appeal. The benefits to litigants are likely to outweigh the downside of having to pay solicitors "extra" if they win. But what about solicitors? Will they be happy with not successful outcomes? At first glance, yes, but on closer look, the answer may be no — if the case has been complicated, long-running and has required the solicitor to invest much time and forward costs to the detriment of his own cashflow. In that case, there would be only one "winner". And how many cases of "wait and see whether I get paid" could the law firm afford to run the risk of pursuing? What would their bankers think? Little wonder there is much doubt (even if insurance covers for a lawyer's legal fee materialises) whether conditional fee agreements substantially replace gal aid or is just wishful thinking. So far, such arrangements are covering themselves in routine personal injury cases, although this is not fully tested. This limited success could be matched for corporate clients in the legal field, for instance, of routine debt collection and other simple litigation cases. Well-organised law firms with procedures tailor-made for repetitive work will undoubtedly be able to benefit.

But solicitors would be unwise to enter "no win, no fee" deals in complicated, one-off, and potentially drawn-out litigation without protecting themselves against financial outlay liabilities. They also need to be sure that the client will provide them with enough long-term continuance of worthwhile instructions to justify risking non-payment from time to time.

There also need to be sensible mechanisms for interim-reviewing of the prospects of success. The decision whether or not "no win, no fee cases" should be continued ought not to be left to the client alone when a solicitor co-ventures in the risk-taking. On balance, there is likely to be an increase in small to medium commercial cases (including professional negligence) once the possible idea of contingency fee agreements in non-personal injury cases is taken up. To some extent — but not as widely as the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, professes — there is some truth in what he stated at the Law Society conference in Cardiff on October 18. He said: "The suggested extension of conditional fees for most civil proceedings would, at last, give middle-income Britain a real opportunity to enforce its rights in the courts. The poor, the rich and the merely 'comfortable' should enjoy equality of access to legal advice and representation... those between the very poor and the very rich are the overwhelming majority of people in the country."

Reservations remain about how willing and how often solicitors will accommodate "no win, no fee" litigation run on behalf of individuals and businesses (who before could not have pursued cases) with its risks and cashflow deprivation. But this gateway to justice for those on middle-class incomes will lead to an increase of cases that business lawyers will need to defend. These new cases will require defending and, though not precisely filling the threatened legal aid hole, will play a part in ensuring that nobody enjoys (or regrets) a reprieve from the "sue everybody" culture of recent years. But the withdrawal of legal aid heralds the end of "try it on" litigation: dubious cases will still be run by ambitious (not just for their



A case of contingency fee fear? Paul Newman as the struggling lawyer in *The Verdict*

clients but for themselves) and knowing plaintiffs' lawyers. This will happen when cases can be started inexpensively and run cheaply, but in ways which embarrass and put the defendant to much trouble and expense.

Sometimes, when there is much to be gained and little to lose, claimants will be encouraged to litigate without legal-expenses insurance. Knowing that the plaintiff is not worth pursuing on a costs order or that it might appear oppressive to do so will result in the sort of "costs blackmail" pressures that have too often been a characteristic of some legal aid cases. Then and in the

future some defendants will choose to make settlement offers rather than continue to defend a case they expect to win but in which the expenses of winning will exceed the cost of an earlier settlement. Believe it. Some solicitors will flourish under the newly heralded "no win, no fee" umbrella (with more than a few hoping it will transmute into full contingency fees) provided they are good at picking winners or settlers. Otherwise they will jeopardise their own future. But whether this approach by solicitors will answer the Lord Chancellor's access to justice prayers is another matter.

● The author is senior partner of Davies Arnold Cooper, a City law firm.

Broken dreams as merger schemes fade

Edward Fennell reports on a trend that may be coming to an end

It is a shame that fly-on-the-wall documentaries are going out of fashion because the discussions and dramas being played out in partners' rooms across the City would be worth recording for posterity.

First, it is likely that Arthur Andersen has at last found a London law firm to give real weight to its idea of creating a top-tier global legal network. Wilde Sapte's partners have agreed in principle to a merger.

By the autumn, the legal landscape will probably have changed fundamentally as Andersen gains good quality banking, finance and insurance skills in English law to plug into its international capability. Wilde Sapte will merge with Garretts (Andersen's present legal outlet) in London and join the likes of Garrigues in Spain, Archibald in Paris and Dundas & Wilson in Scotland as part of the Andersen Legal international network.

The name Wilde Sapte will remain prominent but by the time that a full merger takes place between all the constituent firms, it is likely to have been replaced by something like Andersen Legal, although this is some years off.

To complete this picture of lofty ambitions, it is useful to reflect on the fate of the Norton Rose M5 Group whose break-up is now scheduled for the summer. The creation of the original group in the early 1990s (when Norton Rose joined the M5 "educational co-op") was an important step towards raising regional law firms' standards. The alliance pioneered a host of mergers and the creation of national firms such as Eversheds, Dibb Lupton Alsop and Hammond Suddards.

Now it is falling apart. And why? Because lawyers are individualists by nature and the member firms have finally decided to pursue their separate interests. The

dreams of many partners will have been disappointed. Quentin Poole, managing partner of Wragge & Co, a member of the group, says: "Norton Rose M5 outlived its usefulness. We decided some years ago that clients did not want a national firm and that we can handle the issues by ourselves."

The most significant message from Norton Rose M5 is that a group of premier firms from the regions came to see no benefit in a mega unit. The whole would be less than the sum of its parts.

Wragge's has grown from 372 people to 600 in four years and believes in the benefits of being focused on just one office. Mr Poole puts it forcibly: "Following the model of the accountants is inappropriate for lawyers."

So will the Wilde Sapte-Andersen merger work? In ten years' time will we see Andersen Legal at the top of the tree? Any speculation must take account of what has happened to Andersen's management consultancy wing, Andersen Consulting. For some years, relations with its parent have been troubled. One leading partner at Andersen Consulting hisses with irritation at any hint of identification with the accountants.

So it may be a challenge to Arthur Andersen top brass to stop the same thing happening to Andersen Legal once the honeymoon period ends.

Steven Blakeley, Wilde Sapte's managing partner, sees the merger as an opportunity to marry the Andersen brand with his firm's expertise in English banking law. But blending the French, Spanish and UK firms with one Arthur Andersen ethos will be tough.

It then needs to be followed up by maintaining long-term relationships between lawyers and accountants. If the plan works, it will open a fresh chapter in the development of legal services. It really does deserve a film crew.



Blakeley: opportunity

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<p>5 WORMWOOD STREET London EC2M 1RQ Tel: +44 (0) 171 417 1400 Fax: +44 (0) 171 417 1444</p> <p>GARFIELD ROBBINS LONDON • SYDNEY</p> <p>1.29, The Chifley Tower 2 Chifley Square Sydney NSW 2000 Tel: +612 9375 2181 Fax: +612 9375 2185</p>	<p>COMPETITION PARTNER 7 Years Qualified The competition department of this City firm is headed by one of the leading practitioners in EU/Competition law in the City, with particular expertise in the regulatory and utilities sector, as well as being known for telecoms and media-related work. The firm is now expanding and the department is seeking a 'heavyweight' preferably already a partner, to join its busy team. Superb opportunity. Ref: T038283.</p> <p>VENTURE CAPITAL 2 to 5 Years Qualified Dynamic City firm widely regarded as having one of the leading teams in venture capital requires an assistant preferably with venture capital experience or general corporate experience, who is interested in private equity/management buy-ins and buy-outs. Fast moving, varied and fun environment offering a fantastic career path. It prides itself on being entrepreneurial with excellent training. Ref: L07665.C.</p> <p>INSOLVENCY 1 to 5 Years Qualified A good insolvency lawyer of between one to five years experience is needed to complement this top City firm's very capable insolvency team. The work, of an international flavour, will involve both contentious and non-contentious matters advising on restructurings, debt restructuring and claims. Medium to large firm background with good academic skills necessary not forgetting a good personality. Ref: T06808.K</p> <p>CAPITAL MARKETS 4 Years Qualified Top ten City firm is seeking to recruit additional high calibre capital markets lawyers to join its highly successful and expanding team. The firm currently specialises in structured high value added transactions, in particular securitisations. Candidates must have quality experience in securitisations, international debt and equity markets and the flair and enthusiasm for marketing the team. Excellent opportunity. Ref: T00277.L</p> <p>INSOLVENCY 2 to 5 Years Qualified An excellent career move is available for candidates with IP and/or IT contractual experience. This non-contentious role will involve working with the media and communications group of this dynamic top twenty international City firm. You will have responsibility for a workload which will include acquisitions of computer systems (both hardware and software), outsourcing IT drafting documentation and structuring transactions. The and telecommunications systems, Internet electronic and telecommunications contracts. Do not miss this one! Ref: T0840.P</p> <p>STRUCTURED FINANCE 2-6 Years Qualified Our client is a first tier national Australian firm with a structured finance practice second to none. It seeks highly motivated lawyers with good academic and experience in a medium-large City firm to assist with an exciting mix of international structured finance and leasing work. The firm flagships projects. Applicants must have excellent PFI experience and a willingness to promote the practice. This is a first class opportunity to take your career in the big league. Ref: T0840.L</p> <p>FINANCIAL MARKETS IN-HOUSE NQ to 4 Years Qualified Do you have more than one year's solid experience in banking and finance or corporate law and the desire to work in-house for an Australian investment bank? An opportunity exists in this dynamic top twenty international City firm. You will have leading banks' treasury and commodities group advising on legal issues in relation to capital markets and debt markets and successful candidate will be a proven high achiever with good academic, experience and commercial acumen. The bank will sponsor outstanding candidates for a visa. Ref: T7400.C</p> <p>COMMERCIAL PROPERTY 5 Years Qualified Leading property practice is seeking to recruit an additional assistant to join its dedicated and highly successful PFI team. The firm has extensive experience of PFI projects including many of the firm's flagships projects. Applicants must have excellent PFI experience and a willingness to promote the practice. This is a first class opportunity to take your career in the big league. Ref: T0840.L</p>

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Please contact Andrea Melnick, Dominique W Pengelly or Bryn Bowden (all qualified lawyers) on 0171 417 1400 or write to them at the London office for more information in complete confidence. Call Evenings. Weekends 0171 431 5860 Confidential Fax 0171 417 1444. Email andrea@garfieldrobbins.co.uk

Company Secretary

Business Services

By placing the highest value on partnership with customers, service excellence and innovative management practices, our client continues to grow by winning new and impressive business. This listed plc now has a turnover in excess of £100m and is a recognised market leader.

In anticipation of the retirement of the current incumbent, a new Company Secretary is now sought who will:

- Perform all the company secretarial duties for the Group and its subsidiaries
- Provide advice on contractual issues relating to both customers and suppliers
- Work on a variety of ad hoc projects as required by the Board
- Manage the administration for key schemes including Pensions, Private Health and Share Options

To perform and develop this role further you will be professionally qualified with a legal bias to your work to date. The decentralised nature of the structure demands that you have well-developed interpersonal skills with excellent communication and presentation capabilities. Advising on contractual matters will not only require an attention to detail but will demand a commercial mind as well as a strong personal presence and immediate credibility.

Interested candidates should write with full CV, quoting current rewards package to Karen Wilson, Consumer Goods & Services Practice, Hoggett Bowers, 28 Essex Street, London WC2R 3AX, Tel: 0171 970 9600, Fax: 0171 936 3974, quoting ref: LKW/16100/TT.

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Eminent European investment house is looking to recruit a senior fluent Italian-speaking lawyer to join its dynamic transaction-management team in London. Applicants should have a minimum of 2 years' capital-markets experience. Ref: 39742 Marianne Klien

Derivatives Documentation

Leading US investment house seeks a negotiator (not necessarily qualified) ideally with 3 years' experience in a law firm or bank to join its derivatives documentation team. Experience in drafting and reviewing ISDA documentation is a must. Ref: 39925 Marianne Klien

Banking Lawyer

Major European investment bank requires a banking lawyer with 2-3 years' post-qualification experience to join its legal team in the City. A thorough knowledge of banking law is essential including syndicated loan and general security documentation. Ref: 39238 Marianne Klien

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TELECOMS £50-80,000

Top Ten firm with thriving media group seeks a 1 year plus telecoms specialist with creative flair and experience, probably gained at a niche firm. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to specialise in a variety of areas. (Ref. 20717)

IP TO £70,000

Well regarded IP/TM group at this highly successful City firm seeks an able IP lawyer with 3-5 years' blue-chip experience in the trademark environment. With the group's superb client portfolio, you will have the opportunity to focus on high profile commercial work. (Ref. 20850)

PROP KNOW-HOW TO £60,000

Premier City practice is looking for a know-how lawyer for its highly successful property department. You will deal with a wide range of property related issues as well as being involved in such diverse matters as training, newsletter editorial, and the development of interdepartmental communication. (Ref. 21824)

PENSIONS TO £25,000

Outstanding corporate firm, with one of the most admired client bases in the City, is now seeking to expand its pensions team. As a junior assistant, with up to 2 years' relevant experience, you will be looking for a mix of transactional and advisory work. (Ref. 20880)

TAX £100-280,000

Successful UK law firm seeks a senior tax lawyer with 5-15 years' experience for its London office. Work will be exceptionally varied, advising on the taxation aspects of many of the firm's high-profile global clients for a superb client portfolio. Offer superb financial reward. (Ref. 21298)

CHINA BANKING SEXPATRIATE

Top international City firm seeks a 2-4 year banking lawyer to join its long established China Group, working out of Hong Kong and Shanghai. Apply if you are interested in the growth of financial opportunities in the region, particularly if you have good language skills in Mandarin or Cantonese. (Ref. 20120)

CORPORATE FINANCE TO £60,000

The corporate finance department at this rapidly expanding City firm seeks a senior assistant with 3-5 years' experience in the M&A field. Experienced in Yellow Book or venture capital, you will need to be ambitious and commercially aware, with enthusiasm for practice development. (Ref. 21452)

PROJECTS TO £55,000

Leading international City firm seeks bright, ambitious 1-5 year qualified lawyers with oil, gas, electricity or utilities experience to join its major projects department. Excellent experience prospects for the right candidate in this highly successful group. (Ref. 18256)

COMM PROPERTY TO £50,000

Integrating and successful media-oriented firm seeks a junior property assistant, up to 3 years' qualified, to join its expanding property team. Work will cover the whole spectrum of retail, investment and development. (Ref. 21124)

For further information on private practice vacancies please contact Yvonne Smyth or Andy Golding on 0171 680 3838 (01923 469844 evenings/weekends). Fax 0171 680 3839. E-mail yvonne@zmb.co.uk. Alternatively please write to ZMB, Recruitment Consultants, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PY. ZMB, a Zerk Group Company.

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GEN COMMERCIAL STAFF MARKET

Multi-national communications provider seeks a lawyer with 3-5 years' experience to undertake interesting and varied general commercial work with an emphasis on licensing, acquisition, joint venture and distribution agreements. Coming from one of the Top Ten firms, with a background in corporate finance and general commercial work, the successful candidate will enjoy an excellent financial package. (Ref. 22214)

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An exciting position in a central London based plc has arisen for a lawyer with 2-5 years' experience to focus on acquisitions work and more general in-house work, in a rapidly expanding American owned company. Excellent career move for a commercially minded, transactional lawyer. (Ref. 22128)

DERIVATIVES TOP CITY

A superb opening for a lawyer, with 1-4 years' banking and/or corporate experience, who would enjoy the challenge of a dynamic and fast-paced environment, working on derivatives and funding transactions for a premier investment bank. This is not simply a documentation role, but a real opportunity to become integral to the business within a financial products group. Full training given. (Ref. 22322)

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A new opportunity has arisen within the US bank which has an extremely broad range of business areas. They seek a general banking lawyer who can speak at least one other European language. The work will cover commercial banking, foreign exchange, project finance and general commercial law. There will be lots of international exposure. (Ref. 22401)

GENERALIST ROLE TO £40,000

Excellent new position for a 2-4 year qualified corporate lawyer wishing to work in a headquarter role within a bank. Dealing with acquisitions, developments and other transactions. Working alongside management the established Group Legal Department has a very high profile. There will be lots of international work and the opportunity to travel. (Ref. 22338)

LITIGATION TO £50,000

The City-based institution has a team of lawyers who advise on and conduct regulatory litigation. With a varied caseload and the opportunity to be involved in investigations and strategic risk management, they seek a lawyer with 2-5 years' contentious financial services experience or while other claims. (Ref. 22224)

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London based insurance practice with truly international business seeks a 2-4 year lawyer for a general commercial role. Will look at either non-contentious or litigation lawyers who have a general insurance or employment background. Must be adaptable and commercial and able to fit in to a small team. (Ref. 22432)

For further information in complete confidence please contact Little Orange or Lisa Owens on 0171 623 3822 (0181 740 4108 evenings/weekends). Alternatively, please write to ZMB Industry, Recruitment Consultants, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PY. Confidential fax 0171 623 3823. E-mail lisa@zmb.co.uk. ZMB Industry, a Zerk Group Company.

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- Relevant commercial experience with significant in-house exposure (knowledge of the sector is advantageous but not a pre-requisite).
- An additional European language would be useful.

The position requires a self-starter with outstanding communication skills who is able to work autonomously. Our client has a reputation for recruiting and retaining the best people.

If you have the commercial sense and drive needed to quickly integrate into this entrepreneurial culture and build strong working relationships, then telephone Daniel Richards on 0171 269 2234 or write to him enclosing your curriculum vitae at Michael Page Legal, Page House, 39-41 Parker Street, London WC2B 5LN. Fax 0171 405 2936. e-mail: danielrichards@michaelpagelegal.com

Michael Page are exclusively retained consultants for this position.

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Closing date for applications 9 April 1998
No agencies please.

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The stipend will be set between £13,419 and £16,455, depending upon qualifications and experience. The College will also provide certain allowances and some contribution towards research expenses.

Further details and application forms may be obtained from the Master's Secretary, Emmanuel College, Cambridge CB2 3AP. Completed application forms, which should be accompanied by a statement (not more than 1,000 words in length), outlining the candidate's proposed programme of research, must be returned to the Master's Secretary not later than 21 April 1998. Candidates should ask two persons familiar with their work to send references directly to the Master's Secretary by the same date.

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Commercial Lawyer	1-3 years' ppe	Commercial Lawyer	2 years' + ppe
International	To £35k + car and bens	UK (Part-Time)	£Competitive

This full-time position is for a lawyer to work on the company's overseas business.

Your work will include advertising and sponsorship law, intellectual property, EC law and reviewing, negotiating and drafting a wide range of commercial contracts. You will work closely with the commercial team in the International Division based in the UK and the company's overseas locations in Europe, FSU and the Far East.

Ideally, you should have 1-3 years' ppe gained in-house or in private practice. A willingness to travel, often at short notice, is essential, as is the ability to deal with all levels of management and different foreign cultures. Language skills would be useful.

This part-time position is for a lawyer to work 2-3 days per week on the company's UK business.

Working closely with the UK commercial team, your work will include marketing, advertising and sponsorship law, intellectual property, employment law, EC law and drafting, reviewing and negotiating a wide range of commercial contracts.

Ideally, you will have at least 2 years' ppe gained in-house or in private practice.

The ability to deal with all levels of management across the company is essential and, due to the part-time nature of the role, some flexibility is required.

Please contact Jovan Miskic or Stephen Lacey on 0171 405 6062 for 0171 782 8706 (evening/weekends) or write to them at QD In-House Legal, Condonair, tsc: 0171 831 6394

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responsible for:

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Main entry requirements:

Qualifications:

Administrators and assistant administrators (PE/85/A and PE/86/A respectively)
□ University degree. Admission to competition PE/86/A is reserved for applicants who obtained their degree after 24 April 1995.

Administrators with legal training (EUR/A/132)

□ University degree in English, Scottish or Irish law.

Professional experience:

Administrators with legal training and administrators (EUR/A/132 and PE/85/A respectively)

□ At least two years' professional experience.

Assistant administrators (PE/86/A)

□ No professional experience is required.

Requirements for all three competitions:

□ A thorough knowledge of English and a very good knowledge of another official language of the European Communities (Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish or Swedish). A good knowledge of French is required for competition EUR/A/132. Knowledge of other official languages of the European Communities is an advantage.
□ Nationality of one of the Member States of the European Communities. □ Applicants must not be older than 24 April 1992. Exemptions from the age limit may be allowed in certain cases.

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Closing date for applications: 24 April 1998.

For copies of the Official Journal containing the official application form and further details send a postcard by 15 April 1998 to one of the following addresses, quoting reference EUR/A/132, PE/85/A or PE/86/A:

□ European Parliament information offices:

- Ireland, Molesworth Street 43, IRL - DUBLIN 2
- United Kingdom, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, GB - LONDON SW1H 9 AA

□ European Parliament, Competitions Department, BAK 1081, L-2929 LUXEMBOURG

Please write your name in BLOCK CAPITALS.

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Armstrong World Industries Inc. is a US multi-national with turnover in excess of \$2 billion. Its in-house European legal function is based in Weybridge.

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The workload is extremely varied and includes issues of competition, contract, environmental, employment and matters of a general commercial character in jurisdictions across Europe.

Applications should be made in writing to Mark Wille-Jones, European Legal Counsel, Armstrong World Industries Ltd, Armstrong House, 38 Market Square, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3NG. Fax 01895 256669.

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Business Affairs Executive

Channel 4 Business Affairs is a busy department negotiating the terms of agreements with all the Channel's programme suppliers, matching the needs of the Channel's Commissioning Editors with the aspirations of independent producers all within the tight time frame required by TV production.

We are looking for an experienced television lawyer to work closely with Channel 4's Head of Entertainment. You will take responsibility for the negotiation of agreements with independent producers of a wide range of comedy and entertainment programmes such as Father Ted, Rory Bremner and Harry Hill.

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You will have considerable experience of dealing with agents, a sound understanding of the production process and be familiar with the issues involved in the negotiation of talent agreements generally.

The role is a commercial one and the ability to act quickly and effectively and to identify and address the key issues is important.

If this describes you, please send your CV with a letter detailing your salary expectations and current notice requirements to: Personnel Department, Channel 4 Television, 124 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2TX. Please quote reference: ABR/04/T.

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 7th April 1998.



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* Representative office

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Assistants - London 3-6 years / New York 0-4 years / San Francisco 0-4 years

Brown & Wood was ranked number one in the US in 1997 and is recognised as being the pioneer in the development of mortgage-backed securities. The firm has retained and strengthened this expertise and is actively involved in the growing market for international securitisation programmes.

As part of its clearly defined strategy, the firm seeks to strengthen its UK capability by recruiting a small number of high calibre solicitors. At partner level relevant experience is essential and this will most probably have been gained with one of the recognised London law firms.

At assistant level, the firm seeks bright lawyers to join the teams in London, New York and San Francisco. Successful candidates will be working either in a recognised law firm or financial institution. Consideration will be given to lawyers with general finance experience interested in specialising in the above areas. Those working in the US will be sponsored through either the New York or California Bar exams.

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Partners - London

Assistants - London 3-6 years

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The firm already handles international funds work from the London office and now seeks to recruit a small number of high calibre UK qualified solicitors, at both partner and assistant level, to build and develop the firm's UK investment funds practice.

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LONDON DRY

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To apply, please fax or send a typed CV quoting ENAM00603 to our Resourcing Centre on 0181 945 3018 at Nortel Plc, Maidenhead Office Park, Westcott Way, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3QH. When sending your CV quote the reference number on both the outside of the envelope and your CV.

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For further information, in complete confidence, please contact Nick Peacock, Seamus Hoar or Stephen Rodney (all qualified lawyers) on 0171-405 6062 (0171-228 0478 or 0171-433 5727 evenings/weekends) or write to them at QD Legal Confidential fax 0171-831 6394

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If you believe you combine a commonsense and results-oriented approach with a strong but down-to-earth personality, then please contact our retained consultant Lindsey Newman at In-House Legal, First Floor, High Holborn House, 52-54 High Holborn, London WC1V 6RL. Tel: 0171 405 0151. Fax: 0171 831 6498. E-mail: Lindseynewman@hwgroup.com http://www.hwgroup.com

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For further information in complete confidence please contact our retained consultants Kate Stables or Stephen Rodway on 0171 405 6088 (0956 559 233 evenings/evenings) or write to them at QD Legal, Confidential fax 0171 531 6994.

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For an application form please contact World Service Recruitment Office (quoting ref. 27492/T) Room 111 NE, Busk House, Strand, London, WC2B 4PH Tel. 0171 836 7804 (answer machine).

Application forms to be returned no later than 12:00 noon Tuesday April 14th.

BBC

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RACING: CHAMPION JOCKEY CLOSE TO BETTERING SCUDAMORE'S ACHIEVEMENT

McCoy tees up record attempt

BY RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

FOR a jump jockey whose will to win has brought him to the threshold of breaking the record for most victories in a season, Tony McCoy was in an unusually self-indulgent mood yesterday. He took an unforced day off.

Fresh from collecting the jockey of the year award at the Lesters in London over the weekend, McCoy enjoyed a long lie-in, contemplated a few holes of golf — and sounded bored stiff.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Meneonic (3.30 Chesham)

The Chesham Gold Cup-winning duo of Robert Alton and Andrew Thornton can collect again with Meneonic on his favoured good ground. He should be spot-on after a recent Sandown race.

Next best: Sun Alert (4.50 Uttoxeter)

McCoy lives to ride winners and almost certainly this week, and possibly today, his remarkable career will reach another milestone when he surpasses the 22 winners achieved by Peter Scudamore in 1988-9.

When Scudamore set the record few believed it would be broken. Yet, if McCoy avoids injury — as he tends to do — he will finish the season nearer to the 300 tally. All this from a young man whose first ride over jumps came only four years and a week ago.



French Holly, the Royal & Sun Alliance Hurdle winner, may tackle Istabraq next season

After a record equalling five winners at the Cheltenham Festival, McCoy is now on 219 for the season, more than double the number of victories achieved this term by Richard Dunwoody, his nearest rival. He has four rides at Chesham today — all of them with chances.

In the opening Beagles Novices' Hurdle, he partners Tim Forster's Lankaran, a former French Flat horse, who showed his first worthwhile form over hurdles when chasing home Premier Bay at Wincanton recently. An hour later, he rides the Martin Pipe-trained D'nau, the likely

favourite for the Farrier Handicap Hurdle. Pipe, who provided the ammunition for Scudamore, saddles Pomme Secret in the Court Selling Hurdle — McCoy's best chance on form — and Mite Eagle in the concluding bumper race. "I can't say I have been thinking about

breaking Scud's record — I suppose because Cheltenham was on my mind — but it would be nice to do it," McCoy said yesterday.

Meanwhile, the tantalising prospect emerged yesterday of French Holly, the Royal & Sun Alliance Hurdle winner, clashing with Istabraq, the champion hurdler.

Ferdie Murphy, trainer of French Holly, said yesterday: "We were going to go staying hurdling, but I have spoken to the owner and now he will probably start over two miles next season and then he will go to Ireland for the Irish Champion Hurdle and take on Istabraq. If it didn't work out, we could always go back to the Stayers' Hurdle."

"I rode French Holly myself today and he is incredibly fresh, but the plan now is to sit on it for a couple of days. We have the option of going to Aintree, but I'm not sure that will suit him. He will definitely be entered for Punchestown but, if it stays firm, he won't run anywhere."

Murphy also reported that Paddy's Return is out for the season after suffering an injury to a near-front joint when fifth in the Stayers' Hurdle. "He's got to have a few weeks box resting, and will go novice chasing next season."

The Lambourn open day is being held on April 10. Around 300 stables open their doors to visitors, including those of Jenny Pimm, Oliver Sherwood, Nicky Henderson, Peter Walwyn, Bob Bailey, Charlie Brooks, Barry Hills and Mick Channon.

UTTOXETER

2.20 Segala 3.50 Smith Too
2.50 Big Ben Dun 4.20 The Next Waltz
3.20 Blowing Away 4.50 Sun Alert

Timekeeper's top riding: 2.20 NEWBRIDGE BOY

GOING: GOOD TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

2.20 BIG DOBBER & SON LTD CONDITIONAL NOVICES HURDLE

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Long Hurdle: Charlie Chang 9-1

SETTING: 5.20 Sun Alert 9-1, 5.20 Sun Alert 9-1, 5.20 Sun Alert 9-1

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Carl Evans: 4.00 Double Silk.

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1997: KILDRUMMY CASTLE 5-1

Cambridge crew weigh in nearly a stone a man heavier



Cambridge lined up yesterday without Toby Wallace, their No 5, who was excused training because of a sore throat and slight temperature

Oxford make light of scale story

THERE were raised eyebrows at the Hurlingham Club yesterday when, at the official Boat Race weigh-in, Cambridge scaled an average of almost 15 stone, making them the heaviest crew in the history of the event. The Oxford crews of 1988 and 1990 both averaged 14st 11lb. Cambridge also raised their 1997 height record by a quarter of an inch to an average of 6ft 5 1/2 in and Graham Smith, one of their two British internationals, became the heaviest bow man, at 14st 7lb.

Cambridge's weight advantage is 13lb per man, the second biggest since the event began. "A good big one will always beat a good little one," is an expression that might be true in boxing but this is not always the case in rowing. Oxford, anyway, are not that small and equalled their height record at 6ft 4 1/2 in.

Andrew Lindsay, the Oxford president, was philosophical about the weight differential. "We are quite happy, it sets us a challenge. They have got the equivalent of another cox to carry along and their ergometer scores are pretty similar, so where's the difference? On the day it will be irrelevant. The bigger they are, the heavier they fall."

David Cassidy, the Cambridge president who will stroke the reserve crew, Goldie, on Saturday, accepted that his Blue boat had more weight to carry but added: "We have the horsepower to do that. A powerful car will beat a less powerful car."

Harry Mahon, the Cambridge finishing coach, refused to read too much into the weight factor. "Leander only beat the London lightweight by 11 seconds over the Head of the River

course last Saturday and Leander averaged four stone a man more," Mahon, a New Zealander, said. "Guys over 95 kilos have got to be really good — as good as their weight suggests. Power has to be harnessed. Weights between 85 and 95 kilos are my ideal."

Chris Baillieu, the master of ceremonies yesterday and a Cambridge Blue 25 years ago, talked of feeling like "a pygmy in the land of giants" but observed that "three of the last five winners were the lighter crew", referring to Cambridge in 1993, 1995 and 1996. The differences in those years, however, were marginal when compared with yesterday's statistics.

Both crews had relatively quiet days on the water yesterday. Cambridge were without Toby Wallace, their No 5 man, for both their trips, with Robin Williams, the coach, deputising in the morning and Crispin Page, of Goldie, in the afternoon. Wallace's non-appearance was due to a sore throat and slight temperature. "He went sick on Sunday and we decided to play safe and give him 24 hours off," Williams, who expressed his satisfaction at the results of a week's training at Nottingham, where the water and weather were kind, said.

Oxford's penultimate week of training, in Amsterdam, was spent in the company of their reserves, Isis, on waters well known by their 1997 coach, Rene Mijnders, who was on hand to make observations.

In a year when both crews have made relatively few public appearances, scrutiny will be intense this week ahead of the race, the last in Beefeater's 12-year sponsorship. Uncertainty about the relative merits of the crews is compounded by the possibility of very high tides on Saturday and Sunday.

High tides, coupled with an easterly wind, could mean that the Thames Barrier has to be closed, which would force a postponement.

Should that happen, the race would be rowed on Sunday. Duncan Clegg, the race organiser, is monitoring the situation. "It is very rare for there to be barrier closures on consecutive days," he said yesterday. "It is pretty unlikely."

Today's outings: Oxford 8.45am and 3.30pm; Cambridge 8.30am and 4pm. Saturday's race starts at 1.15pm.

THE 1998 BOAT RACE CREWS

OXFORD	
8 South (Westminster School, UCL and St Edmund's) 22, 6ft 3in, 14st 7lb	8 P A Humphreys (Hampden School and Oriel) 21, 6ft 3in, 12st 11lb
9 P A Humphreys (Hampden School and Oriel) 21, 6ft 3in, 12st 11lb	9 J B Reynolds (Eton College and Keble) 20, 6ft 6in, 13st 6lb
10 J B Reynolds (Eton College and Keble) 20, 6ft 6in, 13st 6lb	10 J Hest (Stod Gym, Welles, Ruhr, Universität Göttingen and Keble) 25, 6ft 7in, 14st 11lb
11 J Hest (Stod Gym, Welles, Ruhr, Universität Göttingen and Keble) 25, 6ft 7in, 14st 11lb	11 M K Williams (Cathedral School, Lund, University of Lund and Herford) 25, 6ft 3in, 14st 11lb
12 M K Williams (Cathedral School, Lund, University of Lund and Herford) 25, 6ft 3in, 14st 11lb	12 E R Collins (Eton College, University of Newcastle and Keble) 22, 6ft 4in, 14st 6lb
13 E R Collins (Eton College, University of Newcastle and Keble) 22, 6ft 4in, 14st 6lb	13 A R Lindsay (Eton College and Brasenose) 21, 6ft 3in, 14st 7lb
14 A R Lindsay (Eton College and Brasenose) 21, 6ft 3in, 14st 7lb	14 P A Burgess (Mission Bay High School, University of Pennsylvania and Lincoln) 25, 6ft 5in, 14st 5lb
15 P A Burgess (Mission Bay High School, University of Pennsylvania and Lincoln) 25, 6ft 5in, 14st 5lb	15 R J Robinson (Hampden School and Lincoln) 20, 6ft 5in, 13st 7lb
16 R J Robinson (Hampden School and Lincoln) 20, 6ft 5in, 13st 7lb	16 A Green (Blenheim School and St Edmund Hall) 22, 6ft 11in, 16st 6lb
17 A Green (Blenheim School and St Edmund Hall) 22, 6ft 11in, 16st 6lb	

CYCLING: FORMER WORLD CHAMPION PLANNING EARLY RETURN TO SADDLE

Armstrong dispels retirement fears

BY JEREMY WHITTE

LANCE ARMSTRONG, the former world champion, who returned abruptly to his home in the United States only six days into his long-awaited comeback from cancer, has rejected suggestions that he is about to retire from professional cycling.

Speaking from his home in Austin, Texas, Armstrong denied rumours that he was ill or disillusioned after his sudden decision to withdraw from the Paris-Nice race earlier this month. "There's nothing wrong with me," Armstrong said, "either physically or emotionally. I just needed to step back for a little while and think about my future."

Armstrong, a former Tour de France stage winner, denied that his return to America had been prompted by a dispute over tactics with his team, US Postal, or by a lack of success since making his return to racing in February. "There's absolutely no conflict with the team," he said. "I wanted to come back to racing. I've committed myself for a year and I'm going to honour that commitment."

Armstrong's decision came after he had been asked to pace a far less illustrious team-mate back to the front of the main field after a pun-

ture. "In hindsight it was ridiculous that we all waited and then had to chase for so long because, with a little research, we'd have known what a hard finish it was that day," he said.

His unexpected departure left neither his American agent nor his team management able to confirm his plans, or indeed his whereabouts, for the best part of two weeks. "I just didn't feel myself that day and I was a little discouraged after my performance in the time-trial the day before," Armstrong, 27, said. "The conditions were bad and

maybe the weather wouldn't have bothered me in the past, but since my illness, things are different."

Armstrong, out of the sport for 18 months as he underwent surgery and then extensive chemotherapy, had started the Paris-Nice race with high hopes of a top-three finish. "Coming back to racing was a little overwhelming and I think maybe I pushed myself too hard," he said. "I hadn't forgotten how tough it can be, but from now on I will be a little more selective about which races I ride."

Armstrong has already missed the first round of the World Cup series and the Milan-San Remo race, but hopes to return to European competition on April 15 at the Fleche Wallonne race in Belgium, a relentlessly hilly race which he won in 1996. "Ideally, I'd like to come back for that race and for Liege-Bastogne-Liege," he said. "I've done well in both of those races before, but... I know how tough they are."

"After all I've been through, it would be said if winning was everything, but if I said I didn't want to win again I'd be lying. It all depends on my training and my condition. We will see how it goes."



Armstrong: discouraged

Answers from page 49

LEEANGLE

(b) A wooden club beat at the striking end.

MUCHILKA

(a) A written book. An adaptation of the Hindi word.

LABARUM

(a) The imperial standard adopted by Constantine the Great (306-337AD), being the Roman military standard of the late Empire modified by the addition of Christian symbols.

MARIPUT

(a) The African zori. Zorilla expensis, a small animal of the weasel family with black and white stripes.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. N6d1 R8d2; 2. N2f1+ Kg7; 3. N8d8 and White wins.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Connolly at centre of salary row

WIGAN Warriors risk losing Gary Connolly to rugby union or Manly-Warringah, the Australian league side, unless the Super League club can meet strict wage restrictions imposed this season.

As well as being unable to negotiate a new, improved contract with the Great Britain centre, Wigan — who are one of six Super League clubs in breach of new salary-cap regulations — may also be prevented from fulfilling a £500,000 two-year deal for Wendell Sailor, the Australia wing, in time for next season.

Players' wages at Central Park are running at 74 per cent of projected income for 1998, while the salary cap is 50 per cent of income and clubs exceeding it risk heavy fines. Wigan have had half their monthly £65,000 income from News Corporation, parent company of The Times and the Super League backers, stopped by the Rugby Football League. Mike Nolan, the Wigan chief executive, said: "I hope people at the top realise this could cost Wigan some of their best players."

A feline safari encounter

Wildlife on One: Serval Secrets BBC1, 8.30pm

The serval is an African small cat which noted for very much, being a secret and elusive creature that has rarely been filmed. That, as you may have guessed, changes with this programme, thanks to the persistence of the wildlife cameraman, Owen Newman. He spent days trying to locate a serval in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania and having found one he stuck with her. She is a mother with a litter of three kittens, six months old. Newman's film charts their often ingenious means of surviving in an environment where food is difficult to come by and there is no shortage of predators many times their size. The star sequence shows the serval leaping in the air to catch a favourite meal, a stalk.

Water Week: The Profits Pump BBC2, 9.00pm

The privatised water companies are widely seen as licences to make money for their shareholders and directors while customers are forced to suffer high prices with no obvious improvement in service. Michael Robinson is too experienced a reporter to accept this version uncritically but his findings are far from flattering about one of the least popular privatisations. He claims that some water companies have used "tricks of the trade" to improve returns to shareholders at the consumers' expense and he looks at how the companies and the regulator have tried to outsmart each other over the size of bills. Even one of the architects of privatisation declares that the consumer has come out badly and Robinson asks whether the regulatory system is strong enough to redress the balance.

Cutting Edge: Thirtysomething Channel 4, 9.00pm

The subjects of this honest and revealing film are three women, well into their thirties, who feel unfulfilled. For Sarah and Jan the problem is not having any children. Sarah is prepared to become a mother by the conventional route, which entails finding a man. To do so she places an ad in the lonely hearts column, declaring that she has "a big heart, big hair and a hole in my life". Jan's work as



The elusive serval cat (BBC1, 8.30pm)

a nanny has made her ache for a child of her own. But she does not fancy getting married and goes for artificial insemination. Babs adores children but accepts that at 35 it may be too late to have them. She would still like a male companion and decides to register with a dating agency. The three women pride us through their quest with a refreshing lack of self-consciousness and a great deal of good humour.

Fighting for Dignity ITV, 10.40pm

Although Desmond Wilcox's film is not overtly polemical, in its quiet and sensitive way it puts as strongly as possible the case for voluntary euthanasia. As its centre is Annie Lindell, the former air stewardess and professional singer, whose final years were highlighted by motor neurone disease. Wilcox had access to Lindell in the months up to her death in December, interviewing her at length and following her march-published High Court hearing where her lawyer argued for her right to die in dignity. The camera shows a way sheet of giving voluntary euthanasia legal sanction but it won Lindell much sympathy, which this film will only increase. Vivacious to the end, she even jokes about the most suitable epitaph for her grave. We also meet Jane Macdonald, who has multiple sclerosis and is determined to carry on Lindell's campaign. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Compo's Country Radio 4, 10.00am (FM only)

Greater praise than for a single place than the words of Bill Owen for Holmfirth in Yorkshire: "I fell in love with it. It's my town. It's a horrible rainy day but I'm always in a good temper in this town." Owen has played the character of Compo in *Last of the Summer Wine* for 25 years and here he takes us on a tour of the town for which he clearly has an affection that goes far beyond the affection any person would feel for the location of a nice little town. The people of Holmfirth have had to live with the intrusion of both film crews and hundreds of gawping tourists. It is interesting that although Owen has almost no accent, no sooner is he in Holmfirth than the broad Yorkshire tones come into his voice.

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening and Zolt Ball 6.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 John Peel 2.00 Chris Moyles 4.00 Dave Pearce. Includes 5.45 News 6.10 News for Thought 7.15 Concert 8.10 News. News in German (6.45 only) 9.05 World Business Report 9.15 The Corporate Headbook 9.30 Literature File 9.45 News World 9.55 Sports Roundup 10.00 Newsweek 10.30 On Screen 11.00 Newsweek 11.20 Celebration 12.00 News Health Matters 12.45 Sports Roundup 1.00 Newsweek 2.00 News 2.45 Outlook 3.30 Musictrack 3.45 News 4.00 News 4.15 News 4.30 News 4.45 News 4.55 News 5.00 News 5.15 News 5.30 News 5.45 News 5.55 News 6.00 News 6.15 News 6.30 News 6.45 News 6.55 News 7.00 News 7.15 News 7.30 News 7.45 News 7.55 News 8.00 News 8.15 News 8.30 News 8.45 News 8.55 News 9.00 News 9.15 News 9.30 News 9.45 News 9.55 News 10.00 News 10.15 News 10.30 News 10.45 News 10.55 News 11.00 News 11.15 News 11.30 News 11.45 News 11.55 News 12.00 News 12.15 News 12.30 News 12.45 News 12.55 News 1.00 News 1.15 News 1.30 News 1.45 News 1.55 News 2.00 News 2.15 News 2.30 News 2.45 News 2.55 News 3.00 News 3.15 News 3.30 News 3.45 News 3.55 News 4.00 News 4.15 News 4.30 News 4.45 News 4.55 News 5.00 News 5.15 News 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Snapshots of an altogether different world

You can say what you like about the American photographer Joel-Peter Witkin, except maybe, "Are you available for weddings and baptisms?" This is largely because Witkin takes the sort of photographs that would make the film-processing department at your local Boots chemist phone for the vice squad.

It's possible that Witkin's 120,000 photos are right up your street, but only if your street has been the scene of a multiple pile-up and is lined with legless accident victims and deformed corpses. But Elton John, Richard Gere and Hollywood hostesses love them. Cindy Crawford was so affected by Witkin's work that she threw up at one of his openings in Los Angeles. It was as fancy a compliment as Joel-Peter Witkin could hope for.

You wonder what makes Witkin tick only as long as it takes him to open his mouth: "My grandmother had one leg and in the

morning I would smell her gangrenous leg," he explained last night on Channel 4's *Vile Bodies* — the first of three programmes looking at how some of the world's top art photographers are trying to jolt us into looking at the human body in new ways. "When most kids wake up in the morning and smell coffee, I would smell my grandmother's rotting leg." Not a tip most estate agents recommend to seduce potential buyers.

What was touching was that Witkin referred to his grandmother as a "physically challenged", a strangely cool silver of political correctness from a man who went on to tell us that he had his first sexual encounter in a "freak show", with a pre-pubescent. And that was very, very important for me and a very, very, thrilling experience. "Any other influences? Since you ask, at the age of six, he saw a car crash. Something rolled towards his feet: yup, a young

girl's severed head. "Out of it," says Witkin. "I see many roots extending to my visual work in the use of severed heads, masks, and my concern with violence, pain and death." Witkin is a man who makes you believe in destiny.

Wheelchair-bound Jacqueline Telleian — who agreed to pose in one of Witkin's trademark fantasy photos, in which he plants deformed models in a tableau and among props which echo medieval religious paintings — is often asked if she felt exploited. She answers no, because "he never made me feel as though he was using my disability as a sensational aspect of the picture. It was always within the context of a larger vision he had. I was really amazed by what he had done. It really was quite beautiful. There is a beauty in deformity. If you allow yourself to see it." There is, but is

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

Witkin exposing it, or exploiting it? The success of Edmund Coulter's film is that he has presented the work of Witkin — along with that of the British artist Jenny Saville and of the New York photographer John Coplans — in a way that is frank enough to make fans of their work purr with admiration, but also unsensationalist enough to make doubters grateful that we have at least been given

an intelligent glimpse into this unknown world: even if, in the end, they have decided to stick with the Athena Maris poster that hangs in the dining room.

Saville's photographs, taken as she pressed herself against a sheet of Perspex in order to flatten and amplify her already fleshy body, were strangely arresting, with a sensual quality that reminded you of the giant canvases of Jumbo women she exhibited at the Royal Academy's *Sensation* show. The folds of flesh — like a sharp pei's face — were startling enough on a small screen to make you want to see these kneaded images in the towering eight-foot-square prints she makes of them.

John Coplans also goes in for monumental photographs, which give the magnified images of his own beer-bellied, sagging, old man's body an eerie, sculptural flavour. "I'm not dealing with the perfect body," he tells us. "I'm

dealing with another kind of truth: that is, how the body *really* is and why we don't accept it." But guess what: he still sucks his stomach in just before the shutter clicks. Huh!

Rory and Wendy Alec, two of the missionaries we met in *Witness* (Channel 4), would probably see these photographs as further symptoms of the disease they must cure. Wendy and Rory, who have moved here from South Africa to launch the Christian Channel, could only be television missionaries: it's the clothes. There must be a mail-order catalogue that enables telly evangelists to keep their wardrobes topped up with just the right shade of pastel suits that will enable them to blend into even the most garish studio backdrop.

To his credit, the director Norman Hull never succumbed to smirking at Wendy and Rory, or at the other missionaries from Ugan-

da, Brazil and America who have turned the tables and are now travelling to Britain in the hope of sowing the seeds of Christianity on what is now regarded, in Christian circles, as barren ground. Nor does he snigger at Sister Cummings and Sister Cherrington, two young, apple-pie Mormons from America's Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who never drop their Colgate smiles as they knock all day on the unwelcoming front doors of Heanor, a market town in Derbyshire.

But he leaves you feeling that it will take more than Rory, Wendy and the Sisters Cummings and Cherrington to lift church attendance in England from its record low of 9 per cent. Now if Rory would only hire Jeremy Paxman to front his TV station, we might see a few sparks flying. "On tonight's programme... 91 per cent of Britons don't go to church and we ask: are they stark raving mad?"

- 10.00am Business Breakfast** (54863)
10.00 BBC Breakfast News (74415)
10.00 Good Morning Britain (480601)
10.05 Killy (281832)
10.15 City Challenge (525281)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (7) (522247)
10.55 The Really Useful Show (7) (146458)
11.00 News (186598)
11.00 News (282988)
10.55pm Call My Bluff (584914)
1.35 Wipeout (278128)
2.00 One O'Clock News (77502)
3.00 Regional News (7) (544132)
4.0 The Weather Show Investigates reports of agricultural and industrial pollution in the mid-Wales water supply (587992)
4.5 Neighbours (7) (282128)
1.10 Ironside (7) (375207)
1.00 Lion Country (5298)
3.00 Wiggly Park (525417) 3.25 Playdays (777721) 3.55 Hubert (744242) 4.10 Chucklewood Critics (165338) 4.30 The Really Wild Show (7) (105474) 5.00 Newsround (7) (583758) 5.10 Grange Hill (7) (146417)
5.35 Neighbours (7) (509788)
5.00 Str O'Clock News (7) and weather (347)
3.0 Regional News (7) (527)
10.00 Holiday Jill Dando arrives by Tiger Moth in Midhurst to stay at one of England's most historic hotels; Kate Humble visits Nepal; Kevin Woodford plays a round of golf at a child-friendly holiday village on the west coast of France; and Craig Doyle is in the Bahamas (7) (1278)
3.00 The Enders Kathy Bates in a film which is hard to miss (7) (811)
10.00 Changing Rooms Transforming an office in a former shop home and a modern sitting room (7) (2417)
3.00 The Wildlife on One Survival Secrets David Attenborough narrates this intimate portrait of a seal cat family in Tanzania's Ngongoro Crater (7) (9434)
10.00 Nine O'Clock News (7) (5229)
3.00 CrimeWatch UK Police appeal for help in finding a man who beat up an old lady before ransacking her house and information on a gang of armed robbers targeting garages in Sussex (7) (581811)
10.00 The Oscars Highlights of last night's 70th Academy Awards from Los Angeles (7) (493182) **WALES:** 10.20 Week In Week Out (525365) 10.50 Give it a Try - Before You Die! (745988) 11.00 The Oscars (580732) 1.00pm CrimeWatch UK Update (429812) 1.10 O'Clock News Test (515274) 1.40 News (240989) 1.45 BBC News 24
1.55pm CrimeWatch Update (7) (307354)
2.5 Cricketer's Sixth Test — West Indies v England Highlights of the fifth and final day (634267)
5.5 Lifes of the Field (c/w, 1983) Sidney Poitier stars as a travelling handyman who agrees to help five German nuns on their small Arizona farm. Directed by Ralph Nelson (7) (543018)
2.5 Weather (404954)
3.0 BBC News 24

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCode
 The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes, which allow you to programme your VCR to automatically record a programme. To find the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record, Videoplus+ (7), Videoplus+ and Video Programme are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

For further listings see Thursday's Vision

TV 1

- 10.00am Sports Special** (2837) 7.30 Games on (707724) 7.45 Simpsons (2888) 8.00am Sports Special (2837) 8.10am Sports Special (2837) 8.20am Sports Special (2837) 8.30am Sports Special (2837) 8.40am Sports Special (2837) 8.50am Sports Special (2837) 9.00am Sports Special (2837) 9.10am Sports Special (2837) 9.20am Sports Special (2837) 9.30am Sports Special (2837) 9.40am Sports Special (2837) 9.50am Sports Special (2837) 10.00am Sports Special (2837) 10.10am Sports Special (2837) 10.20am Sports Special (2837) 10.30am Sports Special (2837) 10.40am Sports Special (2837) 10.50am Sports Special (2837) 11.00am Sports Special (2837) 11.10am Sports Special (2837) 11.20am Sports Special (2837) 11.30am Sports Special (2837) 11.40am Sports Special (2837) 11.50am Sports Special (2837) 12.00pm Sports Special (2837) 12.10pm Sports Special (2837) 12.20pm Sports Special (2837) 12.30pm Sports Special (2837) 12.40pm Sports Special (2837) 12.50pm Sports Special (2837) 1.00pm Sports Special (2837) 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TENNIS 48

Aggressive Henman strikes perfect balance in Florida

SPORT

TUESDAY MARCH 24 1998

FOOTBALL 48

Owen's optimism helps to lift Hoddle's depleted England squad

Ambrose administers likely last rites for embattled England captain

Atherton takes his final bow

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN ST JOHN'S, ANTIGUA

HIS head on his chest, his steps so slow they barely propelled him from the scene, Michael Atherton left the crease here yesterday in a way that defied anyone to believe he could return. Certainly, it must be assumed, he will not be back as captain of a Test side that so regularly and debilitingly less him down and which now, it is clear, he can no longer sustain with his batting.

Even yesterday, at the fag-end of a turbulent tour and with ambitions surrendered by the fragility that denies England credibility, Atherton will have felt that he might do it one more time. Setting out with a first-innings deficit of 373 was discouraging, especially with 11 hours remaining. But he had seen it all before.

The series could not now be saved, but at least it could be lost by a more representative margin than 3-1. In such situations, Atherton has traditionally been the man best equipped, and it is this ability which has helped him to ride the rocky waves of his job, for he had respect on two levels.

Here, just as he has done with a frequency disproportionate to his tour aggregate, he began with immaculate technique and a positive approach. Past lunch, his opening union with Alec Stewart — still a comfort at the lowest ebb of the tour — proceeded with conviction.

Then, for the fifteenth over, Curtly Ambrose switched ends. Instant nemesis. Atherton was characteristically half-forward and Ambrose was through him with a ball of such pace, precision and movement off the seam, that no 34-year-old was entitled to be bowling it.

Cyril Mitchell's decision was not in much doubt and Atherton's slow-motion retreat was mute, unpretentious but revealing. He had scored only 13, raising his total of runs in the series to just 199 at an average of 18. He has been dismissed six times by his greatest adversary, Ambrose. To top it all, it was his 30th birthday.

A large banner had been

unfurled on the popular stand at start of play to wish him happy birthday. Atherton's face registered nothing. When he was out, the banner disappeared.

So too, it seemed, did any lingering England hopes of escape, for in Ambrose's next over, from round the wicket, he bowled an equally merciless ball to Mark Butcher, leaving the left-hander just enough to take the edge. Butcher, who began the series with a first-ball dismissal at Sabina Park, thus ended it with a pair. He is one more of this party who will be going home with his progress and status uncertain.

It was all set up now: 49 for two and Ambrose in peacock mood, his thirtieth wicket of the series secured and a bagful awaiting. But to the gratitude of all who have witnessed too many England processions, the usual script was withdrawn.

For all its early venom, which made the toss here far

immediately, with the West Indies lead at 324, or he could have pressed on to lunch in search of 450. He chose a middle route, calling a halt at the drinks interval with 49 added and Carl Hooper safely past his century.

Any suspicion that England's cricket might buckle was soon proved false, by the two characters most susceptible to mood and circumstance, Caddick and Headley. Had they run in on Saturday, at Wallace and Lambert, as they did now, England's position would surely not have been so hopeless.

Junior Murray thought he identified a half-volley from Headley, but instead lifted it straight to mid-off, and Franklyn Rose was palpably leg-before to Caddick. For a change, the England seam bowlers were not too friendly. Both were quite prepared to drop short at the wicketers — even Ambrose, though they found him impassive.

Hooper's innings had been a curiosity. He had begun with some agricultural flaying almost before taking guard and Tufnell's miss at mid-off, when he had made only six, greatly reduced England's prospects of saving the game. Later, as if putting on his sensible head, he played with sublime authority. This was his ninth century in 73 Tests, but the fifth in his past 22.

West Indies, who have passed 400 in the first innings of all five Tests they have played against England on this ground, were evidently intent on reaching 500 for the second in succession, and did so in one stroke.

Ambrose's batting is almost as revered as his bowling on his home island and a banner hangs in the dry village of Swetes, solemnly recording the day that he registered 1,000 Test runs. He has played few more spectacular shots than the long-arm drive onto the top tier of the new Richie Richardson stand that brought up the 500.

As the bowler was Angus Fraser and the declaration followed immediately, there was further team disappointment. Fraser, Herculean through the series but betraying fatigue now, needed two wickets in this match to exceed John Snow's 27-wicket record for England in the Caribbean. He had taken only one and could not expect to bowl again.



Ambrose appeals successfully for the wicket of Atherton, who was trapped leg-before for 13 yesterday

Gascoigne prepares to pledge future to Rangers

By Mark Dickinson

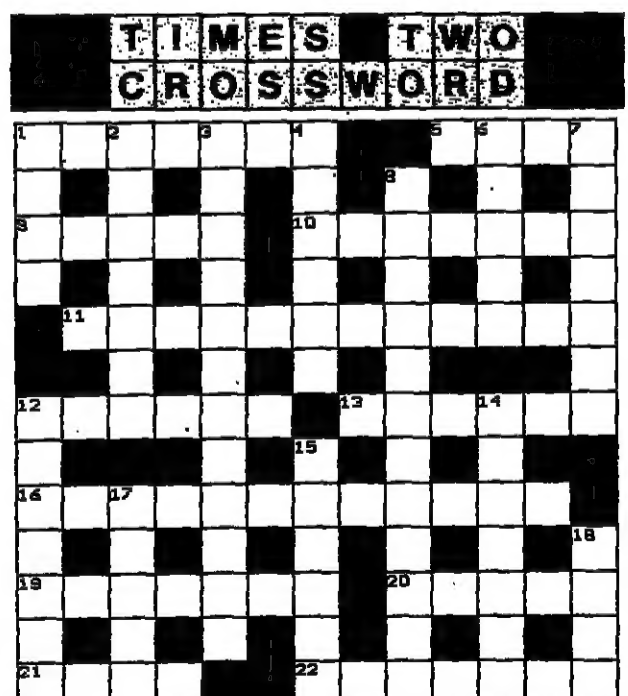
PREDICTING Paul Gascoigne's intentions can be a futile business, but it appears increasingly likely that the England international will opt to stay in Glasgow with Rangers, at least in the short term, when he announces his career plans today.

With the transfer deadline looming on Thursday and Middlesbrough and Crystal Palace growing impatient after agreeing a £3 million fee for the midfielder, Mel Stein, Gascoigne's lawyer, confirmed last night that decision time had arrived. "I can reveal we will come to some kind of conclusion tomorrow," he said. "We have to really, as I don't think we can keep this going indefinitely."

Sources in Scotland suggested last night that he will remain at Ibrox until the end of the season, despite the temptations of a move back south and Rangers' very public willingness to sell him. Gascoigne gave no hint of any impending departure when he came on for the last 18 minutes as a substitute during Rangers' 2-1 victory over St Johnstone on Saturday. The Ibrox crowd changed his name throughout and Gascoigne has publicly stated his desire to help the club to win a tenth consecutive championship.

There is little doubt that a move to his native North East, with a transfer to Middlesbrough, where Bryan Robson, his former England teammate, is manager, appeals, but the upheaval so close to the World Cup is understood to have made up Gascoigne's mind and he is likely to reassess the situation in the summer, depending on whether the Nationwide League first division side have won promotion.

Crystal Palace are likely to react to Gascoigne's rejection by trying to finalise the transfer of Sasa Curcic from Aston Villa for £1 million today. The midfielder, who is also wanted by Fulham, of the Nationwide League second division, has overcome work permit problems by marrying his English fiancée. He will hold more talks with Mark Goldberg, Palace's owner-elect, today and the deal could be completed in time for him to make his debut at home to Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday.



No 1361

- ACROSS**
- 1 Something big, esp. a lie (7)
 - 5 Covetousness (4)
 - 9 One diseased, isolated (5)
 - 10 Very dry, thirsty (7)
 - 11 (Fr.) that indefinable something (2,2,4,4)
 - 12 Nurse, nurse (6)
 - 13 False hair: part of elec. circuit (6)
 - 16 One publicising, advocating, a cause (12)
 - 19 Of vision (7)
 - 20 Not insist on (rule) (5)
 - 21 Brisk pace; a revolutionary (abbr.) (4)
 - 22 Continue; comedy film series (5,2)
- DOWN**
- 1 Determination, volition (4)
 - 2 Lover of Eurydice (7)
 - 3 Doggedness (12)
 - 4 Say again (6)
 - 6 Jawaharlal —, first Indian PM (5)
 - 7 Jewish vernacular (7)
 - 8 Lonely husband (5,7)
 - 12 Uphold (7)
 - 14 Give evidence (7)
 - 15 Puissant bulb (6)
 - 17 Excel (5)
 - 18 Get on to solid food; (Scott.) child (4)
- SOLUTION TO NO 1360**
- ACROSS:** 1 Ivory tower 8 Hands up 9 Simon 10 Task 11 Pleasant 13 Hated 15 Priest 17 Osmivore 18 Rash 21 Chair 22 Italics 23 Dressing up
- DOWN:** 2 Venus 3 Ruse 4 Tiptoe 5 Wiscare 6 Rummage 7 In stitches 8 Hotchpotch 12 Perverse 14 Tyrwald 16 Druids 19 Adieu 20 Pain

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SCOREBOARD FROM ANTIGUA

ENGLAND: First Innings: 127 (D Ramnarine 4 for 20)			
Second Innings			
*M A Atherton lbw b Ambrose	13		
EBurn, 40 balls, 1 run			
A J Stewart c Wallace b Hooper	78		
(171min, 132 balls, 9 runs)			
M A Butcher c Murray b Ambrose	0		
(6min, 6 balls)			
N Hussain not out	80		
(171min, 183 balls, 6 runs)			
G P Thorpe not out	14		
(74min, 73 balls)			
Extras: 2 (2, 2, 2, 2)	9		
Total (8 wickets, 288 overs, 246min)	166		
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-45 (Stewart 29), 2-49 (Stewart 33), 3-127 (Hussain 31)			
BOWLING: Walsh 14-3-37-0 (3 runs), 4-0-12-0, 1-0-3-0, 3-1-5-0, 5-1-17-0, 1-1-0-0			
0; Ambrose 11-3-39-2 (nb 1; 5 runs), 6-2-20-0, 4-1-11-2, 1-0-6-0; Rose 7-2-21-0 (nb 2; 3 runs), 2-0-0-0, 3-1-5-0, 2-1-10-0; Ramnarine 20-5-39-0 (nb 3; 4 runs), 1-0-2-0, 1-0-1-0, 18-5-36-0; Hooper 16-6-25-1 (1 run), 15-5-25-1, 1-1-0-0			
SCORING NOTES (third day): Lunch: 29-0 (11 overs, 47min; Atherton 13, Stewart 21, Test: 123-2 (38 overs, 160min; Stewart 78, Hussain 29)			
WEST INDIES: First Innings			
C B Lambert c Thorpe b Ramnarine	104		
(384min, 222 balls, 1 wk, 10 runs)			
P A Wallace b Headley	92		
(180min, 135 balls, 1 wk, 11 runs)			
*S C Lara c Stewart b Caddick	89		
(127min, 94 balls, 1 wk, 12 runs)			
S Chandepaul lbw b Fraser	5		
(54min, 40 balls)			
G L Hooper not out	108		
(216min, 150 balls, 17 runs)			
R C Holder c and b Caddick	45		
(141min, 178 balls, 4 runs)			
N J R Murray c Hussain b Headley	4		
(12min, 9 balls, 1 run)			
FA Rose lbw b Caddick	2		
(17min, 8 balls)			
C E L Ambrose not out	19		
(20min, 23 balls, 1 wk, 1 run)			
Betres (b 14, nb 18)	32		
Total (7 wickets, 181 overs)	500		
D Ramnarine and C A Walsh did not bat			
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-167 (Lambert 58), 2-200 (Lambert 93), 3-317 (Chandepaul 3), 4-324 (Hooper 7), 5-451 (Hooper 85), 6-458 (Hooper 88), 7-465 (Hooper 93)			
BOWLING: Caddick 28-5-111-5 (1 wk)			
14 runs; 4-0-27-0, 2-0-18-0, 5-0-6-1, 0-27-0, 10-3-36-0; Fraser 21-5-65-1 (nb 1; 11 runs), 1-0-0-0, 1-0-0-0, 4-0-1-18-1, 3-0-10-0, 4-0-0-0; Headley 20-0-109-2 (nb 20; 24 runs); 0-34-0, 2-0-51-1, 5-0-2-0, 2-0-27-0, 3-0-1-17; Tufnell 35-6-57-0 (nb 4; 1 wk; 10 runs); 14-1-42-0, 2-0-14-0, 1-0-3-0, 18-0, 4-0-2-0, 6-1-22-0, 1-0-0-7			
SCORING NOTES (third day): Dinner: as drinks (1.07am) after scoring 49 to off 14 (1 overs in 62 minutes)			
Umpires: S A Butcher and C J Michie (South Africa). Third umpire: P Wymn. Match referee: B N Jinnal (Australia)			
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Hooper wastes special talent

There cannot be a more irritating batsman in the world than Carl Hooper. Indeed, one can push the boat out further. There cannot have been many more irritating batsmen in the game's history than the languid Guyanese. With talent bursting out of his boots, he should have been a great player. Instead, he is Mr Dozy, the greatest wastrel of his generation.

The fact that such a description upsets so many people in his own country reveals the utter parochialism of West Indian cricket. Hooper's refusal to offer a full account of his gifts during a Test career that is entering its second decade is a gross abdication of duty. In other teams — Australia is the one that springs most readily to mind — he wouldn't sniff a place in the batting order with his record.

In 73 Tests, he has made nine centuries, a respectable performance, though not exactly an outstanding one. His average of 34 is thin when it is set beside some of the players who have bolstered the West Indian middle order in the past. Hooper will probably end up with more than 100 Test appearances — more than Sobers, more than

Michael Henderson rues the failure of a gifted batsman to fulfil his potential

Kanhai, more than Richie Richardson — and his record will not show that he deserved that degree of trust.

Robin Smith, whose Test record towers above Hooper's, was released from England's care two years ago. Dean Jones, who won matches for Australia with his dashing batting, was eased to one side before then. Yet not-so-super-duper Hooper rolls on like the Mississippi, apparently guaranteed a place for life.

One might think that a man who owes his team-mates so much would have acquired a touch of humility down the years. Not Hooper. Last year, he declined to join the touring party for a one-day competition, and last month he refused to play for Guyana against England in the game before the Test in Georgetown, despite the selectors' request that he should declare himself. Not even the fact that he is now vice-captain to Brian Lara for West Indies, and therefore a man supposed to set an example, could budge him.

Yet, when he bothers, how

well he can play. West Indies owed their crucial win in Trinidad almost entirely to his unbeaten 94, which carried the game away from England. Had West Indies surrendered that match, they would have lost four successive Tests, after the 3-0 whitewash in Pakistan before Christmas, and the mutual suspicion that is never far away would have resurged. At a stroke, their morale was restored.

Yesterday morning, Hooper completed his hundred, an innings distinguished by his customary grace and, occasionally, ferocious power. When he walks down the pitch to greet the slow bowlers, it is not with a handshake in mind. He makes the straight boundaries very small indeed when he lines up his sights and the effect is thrilling.

When he comes off, as he has done so often for Kent, there is a rare brilliance about his batting that one can only applaud. The trouble is, he has not done it anywhere near often enough for West Indies.

Greatly to their benefit, he is starting to fulfil the role of batting all-rounder. With 14 wickets in this series, at a shade over 21, he has bowled his finger spin pretty effectively and he may eventually be regarded as a bona fide bowler, rather than a filler-in — not that spin figures prominently in their approach. In the years left to him, this handsome underachiever may even rouse himself to bump up his record, though his public manner suggests nothing could be further from his thoughts.

What a wastrel.



Hooper: graceful

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